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TALES OF THE HEART.

BY

MRS. OPIE.

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MRS. OPIE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

"There is no killing like that which kills the heart."

SHAKSPEARE.

VOL. III.

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TALES OF THE HEART.

A WIFE'S DUTY,

BEING A CONTINUATION OF A "WOMAN'S LOVE."

PART THE SECOND.

I AM only too painfully aware, my dear friend, that in my history of a "Woman's Love," I have related none but very common occurrences and situations, and entered into minute, nay perhaps uninteresting details. Still, however common an event may be, it is susceptible of variety in description, because endlessly various is the manner in which the same event affects different persons. Perhaps no occurrence ever

affected two human beings exactly in the same manner; but as the rays of light call forth different hues and gradations of colour, according to the peculiar surfaces of the objects on which they fall, so common circumstances vary in their results and their effects, according to the different natures and minds of those to whom they occur.

My trials have been, and will no doubt continue to be, the trials of thousands of my sex; but the manner in which I acted under them, and their effect on my feelings and my character, must be peculiar to myself. And on these alone I can presume to found any expectation of affording to you, while you read, the variety which keeps attention alive, and the interest which repays it.

In the same week which made me a bride Ferdinand De Walden left England, unable to remain near the spot

which had witnessed the birth of his dearest hopes, and would now witness the destruction of them.

I could have soothed in a degree the "pangs of despised love," by assuring him that I was convinced nothing but a prior attachment could have prevented my heart from returning his love. I could have told him that I seemed to myself to have *two hearts;* the one glowing with passionate tenderness for the object of its first feelings, the other conscious of a deep-rooted and well-founded esteem for him. But it was my duty to conceal this truth from him, as such an avowal would have strengthened my hold on his remembrance, and it was now become his duty to *forget*.

My mother not very long after my marriage wounded my feelings in a manner which I could not soon recover. I was speaking of De Walden with that

warmth of regard which I really felt for him, and lamenting that I should probably now see him no more, when, with a look of agony for which I was not prepared, she begged me never to mention the name of De Walden to her again; for that her only chance of being able to reconcile herself to the marriage which I *had made*, was her learning to forget the one which she had *so ardently desired*.

Eagerly indeed did I pledge my word to her, that I would in *future never name De Walden*.

The first twelve months of my wedded life were halcyon days; and the first months of marriage are not often such,—perhaps they never are, except where the wedded couple are so young that they are not trammelled in habits which are likely to interfere with a spirit of accommodation; nor even then, probably, unless the temper is good and

yielding on both sides. It usually takes some time for the husband and wife to know each other's humours and habits, and to find out what surrender of their own they can make with the least reluctance for their mutual good. But we had youth, and (I speak it not as a boast) we had good temper also. Seymour, you know, was proverbially good-natured; and I, though an only child, had not had my naturally happy temper ruined by injudicious indulgence.

You know that Seymour and I went to Paris, and thence to Marseilles, not very long after we married, and returned in six months, to complete the alterations which we had ordered to be made to our house, under the superintendence of my mother.

We found our alterations really deserving the name of improvements, and Seymour enthusiastically exclaimed, "O

Helen! never, never will we leave this enchanting place. Here let us live, my beloved, and be the world to each other!"

My heart readily assented to this delightful proposition, but even then my judgement revolted at it.

I felt, I *knew* that Pendarves *loved* and was *formed for* society. I was sure that by beginning our wedded life with total seclusion, we should only prepare the way for utter distaste to it; and concealing my own inclinations, I told him I must stipulate for three months of London every spring. My husband started with surprise and mortification at this *un-romantic* reply to his sentimental proposal, nor could he at all accede to it; but he complained of *my passion* for London to my mother, while the country with *me* for his companion was quite sufficient for *his* happiness.

"*These are early times yet*," replied

my mother coldly; and Seymour was not satisfied with the mother or the daughter.

"Seymour," said I one day, "since you have declared against keeping any more terms, and will therefore not read much law till you become a justice of the peace, pray, tell me how you mean to employ yourself?"

"Why, in *the first place*," said he, "I shall read or write. But my *first* employment shall be to teach you Spanish. I cannot endure to think that De Walden taught you Italian, Helen."

"But you taught me to love, you know, therefore you ought to forgive it."

"No, I cannot rest till I also have helped to complete your education."

"Well, but I cannot be learning Spanish all day."

"No; so perhaps I shall set about writing a great work."

"The very thing that I was going to

propose, though not exactly a great work. What think you of a life of poor Chatterton, with critical remarks on his poems?"

"Excellent! I will do it."

And now having given him a pursuit, I ventured to indulge some reasonable hopes that home and the country might prove to him as delightful as he fancied that they would be; and what with studying Spanish, with building a green-house, with occasional writing, with study, with getting together materials for this life, and writing the preface, time fled on very rapid pinions; and after we had been married two years, and May arrived a second time, Seymour triumphantly exclaimed, "There, Helen! I believe that you distrusted my love for the country; but have I once expressed or felt a wish to go to London?"

"The ides of March are come, but not gone," I replied; "and surely if I wish to go, you will not deny me."

"No, Helen, certainly not," said he in a tone of mortification; "if I am no longer all-sufficient for your happiness."

Alas! in the ingenuousness of my nature, I gave way when he said this to the tenderness of my heart, and assured him that my happiness depended wholly on the enjoyment of his society; and I fear it is too true that men soon learn to slight what they are sure of possessing. Had I been an artful woman, and could I have condescended to make him doubtful of the extent of my love, by a few woman's subterfuges; could I have feigned a desire to return to the world, instead of owning, as I did, that all my enjoyment was comprised in home and him; I do think that I might have been for a much longer period the happiest of wives; but then I should have been in my own eyes despicable as a woman, and I was always tenacious of my own esteem.

May was *come*, but not GONE—when I found my husband was continually reading to *me*, after having previously read to *himself*, the accounts in the papers of the gaieties of London.

"What a tempting account this is, Helen, of the Exhibition at Somerset House! I should like to see it. Seeing pictures is an elegant rational amusement. And here are soon to be a ball and supper at Ranelagh. A fine place Ranelagh for such an entertainment."

Here he read a list of routs and cotillion balls at different places; but one day he read with infinite mortification, that our uncle, Mr. Pendarves, had given a ball on the return of his son-in-law to parliament.

"How abominable," cried Seymour, "for my uncle to give a ball, and not invite us to go up to it!"

"You forget," replied I, "that, know-

ing our passion for the country, and that we had abjured the world, he did not like to ask us, because he knew he should be refused."

"I am not so sure he would have been refused, Helen; or as to having abjured the world—No, no; we are not such fools as to do that—are we, my dearest girl?"

"We are bound by no vows, certainly; and as soon as retirement is become irksome to you, we can go to London."

"Did I say that retirement was grown irksome? Oh, fie! such an idea never entered my thoughts: besides, as this fine ball is over, what should we go to London for?"

"There may be *other* fine balls, and fine parties, you know."

"True; but really, Helen, I begin to believe you wish to go to London."

"If *you* do, I do *certainly*."

"I! Not I indeed. Ah, Helen! I suspect you are not ingenuous with me; and you DO wish to go."

I only smiled: but I soon found that the book did not get forward, that the newspapers were anxiously expected, and that my Spanish master sometimes forgot his task in the indulgence of reverie; and I debated within myself, whether it would not be for our interest and our domestic comfort, to propose to go to London, in order to conceal from him as long *as I could* that I was not sufficient for his happiness; and that he would live and die *a man of the world*. I was the more ready to do this, because I wished that my mother should not see my empire was on the decline. Why did I so wish? I hoped it was because I was desirous to spare her any anxiety for my peace; but I fear it also was because I did not like that she should have cause

to suspect her choice for me was likely to have proved a better one than my own. (I believe I have observed before, how strong my conviction is, that there is scarcely such a thing in nature as a *single motive* of action.)

I therefore, in the presence of my mother, hinted a wish to go to London for six weeks. She started, and looked suspiciously at Pendarves; while he, with an odd mixture of surprise, joy, and mortification in his countenance, exclaimed,

"Do I hear right, Helen? Are you, after all you have declared, desirous of going to London?"

"I am: 'Variety is charming,' says the proverb; and here you know it is *toujours perdrix!*"

"Well, there, madam," said Pendarves, turning to my mother, "you will now, I hope, believe what I assured you

of some time ago, that Helen had a passion for London ?"

" *C'est selon,*" replied my mother, " to use a *French phrase,* in answer to Helen's," and darting as she spoke a penetrating glance at me.

" I assure you," replied I, " that my wish to go to London originates with *myself,* as I believe that this journey to the metropolis is the *wisest* as well as the most *agreeable* thing I could desire."

My mother sighed; and a " Well, my child, I have no reason to doubt your word," broke languidly from her lips, while she suddenly rose and left the room.

" And are you *really* in earnest, Helen ?" said Pendarves.

" Never more so; and unless my proposal is very distasteful to you, I beg you will write directly, and engage lodgings."

" Distasteful! Oh, no! quite the con-

trary. I shall be *proud* to exhibit my lovely wife in London, where no doubt she will be as much admired as she was abroad.—Do you think," he affectionately added, "that I have forgotten the exquisite pleasure I experienced at seeing you the object of general attraction wherever you moved ? "

This was said and felt kindly; still it did not inspire me with that confidence which it seemed likely to inspire ; for *I*, though I was conscious of my husband's personal beauty, had no vanity to gratify in exhibiting him to the London world. I had no wish to be the most *envied* of women, it was sufficient to me to know that I was the *happiest;* and I thought that if Pendarves loved as truly as I did, the consciousness of his happiness would have been sufficient for him. Still, I am well aware how wrong it is to judge the love of others, according to our own capabi-

lity of loving. As well and as justly might we confine beauty, or the power of pleasing, to one cast of features or complexion. All persons love after a manner of their own; and woe must befall the man or woman who expects to be loved according to their own way and their own degree of loving, without any consideration for the different character and different feelings of the beloved object.

"How absurd I am!" said I to myself, after I had shed some weak tears in the solitude of my chamber, because Pendarves did not love me, I found, as I loved him. "How absurd! True, *he* delights in the idea of exhibiting *me*, and *I* have no wish to exhibit *him*. After all, he loves more *generously* than I do, and my selfishness is nothing to be proud of."

Thus I reasoned with myself, and tried

to fortify my mind to bear the cares and the dangers which I had, on principle, provoked.

"One word, Helen," said my mother, when she was alone with me after what had passed relative to my projected journey: "Are you sure, my dear child, that in urging your husband to go to London you have acted wisely?"

"As sure as the consciousness of my bounded vision of futurity can allow me to be. I thought it better to *forestall* my husband's wishes than to wait for the *expression* of them."

"If not *better*, it was less *mortifying*," replied my quick-sighted parent; and we said no more on the subject.

In three days time we had lodgings procured for us near Hanover-Square; and on the fourth day from that on which I made known my wishes, we set off for London. But how different were the

feelings of my husband and myself on the occasion! He was all joy and pleased expectation, unmixed with any painful regret or any anxious fears. But I left for some time a tenderly beloved mother, and the scene of tranquil and certain enjoyment. I was going, I knew, to encounter probably the influence of rivals, both in men and women, in my husband's attentions, and the dangerous power of long and early associations. And how did I know but that into a renewal of intimacy with his former associates I was not bringing my husband? But I had done what I thought right; and if I had presumptuously acted on the dictates of human wisdom alone, I prayed, fervently prayed, that the divine wisdom would take pity on my weakness, and avert the courted and impending evil.

I was many miles on my journey be-

fore I could drive from my mind the recollection of my mother's countenance when we parted. It did not alone express sorrow to part with me: it indicated *anxiety*, foreboding of *evil to happen* before we met again; and it required all my husband's enlivening gaiety and fascinating powers to revive my drooping spirits. His gaiety, I must own, however, depressed rather than enlivened me at first; for I was mortified to see with what delight he anticipated our return to the great world: but, as I had no ill-tempered feelings to oppose to the influence of his buoyant hilarity and his winning charm of manner, they at length subdued my depression, and imparted to me their own pleasant cheerfulness.

"Dear, dear London!" cried Pendarves as our horses' hoofs first rattled on its pavement, "Dear London! how I love thee! for here I was first convinced how

fondly Helen loved me!" So saying, he pressed me to *his* heart, and a feeling of revived confidence stole over *mine*.

We found my uncle and Mrs. Pendarves still in London; but I did not feel as rejoiced on the occasion as they and my husband did. The latter was glad because he had in them proper protectors for his wife, whenever he was obliged to leave me, and the former, because they had really an affection for us. But I knew so much of Mrs. Pendarves, by the description I had heard of her from Lady Helen and my mother, and what I had observed myself, that I dreaded being exposed to her home truths and her indiscreet communications.

It was not long before we found ourselves completely in the vortex of a London life. And as for the most part my husband's engagements and mine were the same, I lost the gloomy forebodings

with which I left home, and even lost my fears of Mrs. Pendarves.

One day Pendarves told me he was going to dine with an old friend of his, Maurice Witred; but as I was not going out, he hoped to be back to drink tea with me; but I expected him in vain, and he did not return till bed-time.

He told me he was sorry to have disappointed me; but his friend had prevailed on him to go to the play. This excuse was so sufficient, and his wish to accompany Mr. Witred so natural, that I should have had no misgiving whatever had I not observed a certain degree of constraint in his manner, and a consciousness as if he had not told me *all*. However, I was satisfied with the alleged cause of his absence, and I slept as soundly as usual. But the next morning came Mrs. Pendarves, saying she was glad to find me alone. She told me she

had met my husband, and she had given him such a set to! (to use her own elegant phrase.)

"And wherefore?"

"Oh! for going to the play with Maurice Witred and his lady."

"Lady! I did not know he was married."

"He is *not* married; and it was very wrong, and had an ill appearance for a young married man to be seen in public, though it *was* in a private box, with a profligate man and his mistress. I thought he would not tell you; but I was resolved you should know it, that you might scold him with 'the grave rebuke of a severe *youthful beauty* and a grace.'"

I did not reply, even to assure her I was better pleased that she should scold my husband than that I should do it myself; for I knew she was incorrigible, and her

communication had thrown me into a painful reverie; for I found that Pendarves had begun to practise disingenuousness and concealment with me, and in the *most dangerous way;* for he had concealed only *half* the truth; by which means persons make a sort of compromise with their integrity, and lay a *salvo* to their consciences; for they fancy they are not *lying*, *though* they are certainly *deceiving;* whereas, if they tell a *downright lie*, they at least KNOW they are sinning, and may be led by conscious shame into amendment. But there is no hope for those who thus delude themselves; and as *ce n'est que le prémier pas qui coute*, I felt that I had lost some of my confidence in my husband's sincerity. Alas! when perfect confidence between man and wife is *once destroyed*, there is an end to *perfect happiness!* But I tried to shake off my abstraction; and I list-

ened as well as I could to my talkative companion, whose passion was to *give advice*, that *troublesome* but *common* propensity in *weak people;* and like such persons, she was always boasting of the *advice she had* given, that which she *would* give, or of the *dressings* and *set-tos* which she had bestowed, or meant to bestow. At length, however, much to my relief, she went away, and not long after Pendarves returned.

"So," said he, "I find Mrs. Pendarves has been with you, and I suppose (blushing as he spoke) that she has been telling tales of me?"

"And of herself," I replied, smiling as unconcernedly as I could; "for she owns to the presumption of having given you a *set-to*, as she calls it."

"Yes: but I suppose she told you the cause?"

"No doubt."

"And do you think it deserved so severe a lecture?"

"I think it was not right in a respectable married man to seem to give his countenance to such a connexion as the one in question; and I suspect that you are of the same opinion."

"I am; but why do you think so?"

"From conceit; because I believe that fear of my censure made you conceal from me what you had done."

"True, most true—and my repugnance to tell you all proved to me still more how wrong that all was."

"My *dearest* Seymour," I replied, "believe me, that *no all* which you can communicate to me can ever distress me so much as my consciousness of your want of ingenuousness, and of your telling only half the truth can do. I saw by your manner something was wrong, and I shall ever bless the weak indiscretion

of Mrs. Pendarves, because it led to this salutary explanation; and I trust that the next time you go with Mr. Witred and his *lady* to the play, you will mention *both*."

"But I shall *never* go with them again," eagerly replied my husband, "as you, Helen, think it improper."

"But I may be too rigid in my ideas; and I beg you to be ruled by your own judgement, rather than mine. All I ask is, to be told the *whole truth*."

Pleasant to my feelings then, and dear to my recollection since, is the look of tenderness and approbation which Pendarves gave me as I spoke these words; and when he left me, peace and confidence seemed restored to my mind.

The next evening was the fashionable night for Ranelagh, and my husband and I, who dined out, were to accompany a large party to that scene of gay resort.

Ranelagh was the place for tall women

to appear to advantage in. Little women, however beautiful, were likely to be unnoticed in that circling crowd; but, even unattended with beauty, height and a good carriage of the person were sure to be noticed there. The pride which Pendarves took in my appearance was never so fully gratified as at Ranelagh; for while I leaned upon him, I used to feel my arm pressed gently to his side as he heard or saw the admiration which my lofty stature (to speak modestly) excited. This evening, as I was quite a *new face* in the splendid round, I was even followed as well as gazed at; and I was not sorry when our carriage was announced, though I was flattered on my own account, and pleased on my husband's; for I was eager to escape from some particularly impertinent starers, especially as I found that Pendarves was disposed to

resent the freedom with which some men of high rank thought themselves privileged to follow and to look at me. Before we separated, some of the party proposed that we should meet again at Ranelagh on the next night but one, and while I hesitated my husband exclaimed, "No mock modesty, Helen; no declining an opportunity, which you must enjoy, of being admired. So, pray tell our friends you gladly accede to their proposal."

"I gladly accede to your proposal," cried I laughing, but blushing with conscious vanity at the same time.

"What an obedient wife!" cried one of the ladies: "public homage has not spoiled her *yet*, I see."

"Nor can it," replied I, "while I possess my husband's homage, which I value *far more*."

"*While* you possess it! Then, if his

homage should fail you, you might perhaps be pleased with the other?"

"I humbly hope *not:* but if exposed to that bitter trial, I dare not assert that I should not yield to it as scores of other women do every day; for I must say, in defence of my sex, that good husbands, generally speaking, make good wives; and that most women originally value the attentions of their husbands more than those of other men. On your sex, therefore, O false and fickle man! be visited the crimes of ours!"

This grave discourse provoked some laughter from my audience, from which I was glad to escape to our carriage, which had waited for us while we alighted.

"So, Helen," said my husband as we went home, "it is your opinion,

> That when weak women go astray,
> Their lords are more in fault than they."

"It is."

"And you said what you did as a gentle hint and a kind warning to *me* how I behaved myself?"

"Not so," said I eagerly: "I humbly trust that even your example would not make me swerve from my duty; and my observation was a general one. Still, my favourite and constant prayer is 'Let me not be led into temptation;' and believe me, Pendarves, that she who is able to admit that she may possibly err, is less liable to do so than the woman who seems to believe she is incapable of it."

"Helen," said my husband, "I never for one moment associated together the idea of you and *frailty:* therefore, dear girl, I will carry you to Ranelagh again and again; for I *do love* to see you admired; and I feel proud while I think and *know* that even princes would woo your smiles in vain."

He kept his word, and we never

missed a full night at Ranelagh. But one evening completely destroyed the unmixed pleasure which I had hitherto enjoyed there.

We had not been round the room more than twice when we were joined by Lord Charles Belmour, a former associate of my husband's, who, after a little while, begged to have some private conversation with him; and taking his arm, Pendarves consigned me to the care of the gentleman with us, on whose other arm hung a lady to whom he was busily making love: consequently, his attention was wholly directed to her, and I had nothing to divert mine from the conversation which occasionally met my ear between my husband and his noble friend, who walked close behind us.

Sometimes this conversation was held in a low voice, and then I ceased to listen to it; but when they spoke as

usual, I thought I was justified in attending to them.

"Look there!" said Lord Charles, as we were passing a box in which sat two ladies splendidly dressed, accompanied by two gentlemen, "look, Pendarves, there is an old friend of yours!"

"Ha!" said my husband, lowering his voice, "I protest it is she! I did not know she was in England. Who are those men with her?"

"What, are you *jealous?*"

"Nonsense! Who are they?"

"The man in brown is husband to the lady in blue; and for the sake of associating with a titled lady, which your friend is, you know, he allows his wife, who is not pretty enough to be in danger, to go about with her and her *cher ami*—the young man in green. You know she was always a favourite with *young* men."

"True, and young indeed must the

man be who is taken in by her fascinations."

"But she is wonderfully handsome still."

"I hardly looked at her."

"We are passing her again—*Now*, then, look at her *if you dare*."

"Dare!"

"Yes: for her eyes are very like the basilisk's."

"I will risk it."

I too now looked towards the box we were approaching; at the end of which stood a young man in green, hanging over a woman, who though no longer young, and wholly indebted to art for her bloom, appeared to my now jealous eyes the handsomest woman I had ever beheld. I also observed that she saw and recognised my husband; for she suddenly started, and looked disordered, while an expression of anger stole over her face. A sudden stop in the crowd, to allow the

PRINCE and his party to pass, who were just entering, forced us to be stationary a few minutes before her box. Oh! how my heart beat during this survey! But one thing gratified me: I was sure, as I did not see her bow her head or curtsy, that Pendarves did not notice her. And *yet*, Lord Charles had, uncontradicted, called her his *old friend!*

Who, then, and *what* was she? would he tell me? Perhaps he would when he got home; if he did not, I felt that I should be uneasy.

We soon moved on again, and I heard Lord Charles say,

"Cruel Pendarves! not even to look at or touch your hat to her! Surely that would not have committed you in any way."

"It would have been acknowledging her for an acquaintance, which I do not now wish to do, especially *in my wife's*

presence," I *conclude* he said, for he spoke too low for me to hear; but I judge so from the answer of Lord Charles."

"Oh! then, if your wife was *not* present, you would not be so cruel?"

"I did not say so."

"No: but you implied it."

"I deny that also."

Then coming up to me, my husband again offered me his arm, and Lord Charles left us. I soon after saw this beautiful woman walking in the circle, and heard her named by the gentleman next me as Lady Bell Singleton—a dashing widow more famed for her beauty and her fascinations than her morals. But Pendarves said nothing; and though she looked very earnestly at him, and examined me from head to foot as I passed, I saw that he never turned his eyes on her, and seemed resolved not to see her.

I had therefore every reason to be

pleased with my husband's conduct; but I felt great distrust of Lord Charles. I thought he was a man, from what I had overheard, whom I could never like as a companion for Pendarves; and I disliked him the more, because, if I had given him the slightest encouragement, he would have been my devoted and public admirer, and would have delighted to make his attachment to me and our intimacy the theme of conversation. I also saw that my cold reserve had changed his partiality into dislike; and I could readily believe that he would be glad in revenge to wean my husband from me. Still, I could not wish that I had treated him otherwise than I did; for I could not have done it without compromising my sense of right, as *half measures* in such cases are of no avail; and if a married woman does not at once show that pointed and particular admi-

ration is offensive to her, the man who offers it has a right to think his devoirs may *in time* be acceptable.

Here I may as well give you the character of this friend of my husband's.

Lord Charles Belmour was the son of the Duke of ———; and never was any man more proud of the pre-eminence bestowed by rank and birth: but to do him justice, he began life with a wish to possess more honourable distinctions; and had he been placed in better circumstances, the world might have heard of him as a man of science, of learning, and of talents. But he had every thing to deaden his wish of studious fame, and nothing to encourage it. Besides, he was too indolent to toil for that renown which he was ambitious to enjoy; and instead of reading hard at college, he was soon led away into the most unbounded dissipation, while he saw honours daily

bestowed on others which he had once earnestly wished to deserve and gain himself. But he quickly drove all weak repinings from him, proudly resolving in future to scorn and undervalue those laurels which could now never be his.

He therefore chose to declare it was beneath a nobleman, or even a gentleman, to gain a prize, or take a high degree; and this assertion, in which he did not himself believe, was quoted by many an idle dunce, glad so to excuse the ignorance which disgraced him.

But, spite of this pernicious opinion, Lord Charles never sought the society of those *who acted* upon it; and Pendarves, who had *distinguished* himself at Oxford, was his favourite companion there.

When Lord Charles entered the world, he gave himself up to all its vanities and irregularities. But he was conscious of great powers, and also conscious that he

had suffered them to run to waste. Still, if he could not employ them in a way to excite admiration, he knew he could do so in a way to excite fear; and after all, *power* was *power*, and to *possess* it was the *first wish* of his heart.

Accordingly, though conscious he had himself the follies which he lashed, he had no mercy on those of his acquaintance; for, as he himself observed, "it is easier to laugh at the follies of others than amend one's own;" and though courted as an *amusing* companion, he was often shunned as a *dangerous* one.

Women, also, who defied him either as a suitor or an enemy, have rued the day when they ventured to dispute his power: but, as I at length discovered, there was *one* way to *disarm* him; and that was to own his ability to do harm, and try to conciliate him as an *active* and *efficient* friend.

In that case his generous and kind

feelings conquered his less amiable ones, and his friendship was as sincere and valuable as his enmity was pernicious.

But, with no uncommon inconsistency, while he declared that he thought a nobleman would disgrace himself if he sung well, or sung at all, or entered the lists in any way with persons *à talens*, he condescended to indulge before those whom he respected in the lowest of all talents, though certainly one of the most *amusing*, that of mimickry—a gift which usually appertains to other talents, as a border of shining gold to the fag end of a piece of India muslin, looking more showy indeed than the material to which it adheres ; but how inferior in value and in price !

But to resume my narrative. My husband did *not* mention Lady Bell to me. The next time I went to Ranelagh with *mixed feelings*—for I dreaded to see this

lady again, and to observe that Pendarves had chosen at length to own her for an acquaintance; for, had he been sure of never renewing his acquaintance, why should he *not* have *named her to me?*

It was also with contending feelings that I found myself obliged to have Mrs. Pendarves as my companion; for though I *wished* to be informed on the subject of my anxiety, I dreaded it at the same time: and I was sure that she would tell me *all she knew*.

A nephew of Mrs. Pendarves was our escort to Ranelagh; and my husband, who dined with Lord Charles Belmour (much to my secret sorrow), was to join us there.

My eyes looked every where in search of Lady Bell Singleton, and at length I discovered her. My companion did the same; and with a sort of scream of surprise, she said, "Oh, dear! if there is

not Lady Bell Singleton! I thought she was abroad! Do you know, my dear, when she returned to England?"

"How should I know, madam? The very existence of the lady was a stranger to me till the other evening."

"Indeed! Why, do not you really know that is the lady on whose account your mother forbade your marriage with Pendarves?"

"No, madam, my mother was too discreet to explain her reasons."

"Well, my dear, you need not look so uneasy—it was all off long beforehe married you—thoughshe is a very dangerous woman where she gets a hold, and looks

'So sure of her beholder's heart,
Neglecting for to take them.'"

I scarcely heard what she said, for a sick faint feeling came over me at the consciousness that I was now in the presence of a woman for whom Pendarves

had undoubtedly felt some sort of regard; but it was jealousy for the past, not of the present, that overcame me, though my husband's total silence with regard to this lady was, I could not but think, an alarming circumstance. And "it was on her account your mother forbade your marriage with Pendarves" still vibrated painfully in my ears, when Lord Charles and he appeared. With a smile by no means as unconstrained as usual I met him, and accepted his proffered arm. Lord Charles walked with us for a round or two—then left us, whispering as he did so, "Remember! *do* notice her, she expects it, and I think she has a right to it."

Pendarves muttered, "Well, if it must be so," and his companion disappeared.

Soon after we saw him with Lady Bell Singleton leaning on his arm; and I felt convinced he had made the acquaint-

ance since we were last at Ranelagh, as he never noticed her till that night. We were now meeting them for the second time, and passing close to them, when I saw Lady Bell pointedly try to catch my husband's eye: and no longer avoiding it, he took off his hat, and civilly, though distantly, returned the cordial but silent salutation which she gave him.

"This," thought I, "is in consequence of Lord Charles's interference, and explains what Pendarves meant by 'Well, if I must, I must.'"

How I wished that he would break his close silence on this subject, and be ingenuous! But I felt it was a delicate subject for him to treat—and I resolved to break the ice myself.

"That was a very beautiful woman to whom you bowed just now," said I, glad to find that Mrs. Pendarves was looking another way.

"She *has* been beautiful indeed!" was his answer.

Then looking at me, surprised I doubt not at the tremor of my voice, he was equally surprised at my excessive paleness, and with some little sarcasm in his tone, he said,

"My dear Helen, is my only bowing to a fine woman capable of making your cheek pale, and your voice trembling?"

"No," said I, "not so—you wrong me indeed; nor did I know that my cheek was pale." I said no more, shrinking from the seeming indelicacy of forcing a confidence which he was disposed to withhold.

"Helen," said he, looking up in my face, "I see our aunt Pendarves has been at her old work, and telling tales of me. I protest I shall insist on my uncle's sending her *muzzled* into your company."

"The best way of muzzling her would

be to anticipate all her communications yourself. It would be such an effectual silence to a woman like our little aunt, to be able to say, 'I know that already!'"

"That's artfully put, Helen! But, really, there are some things which I have respected you too much to name to you. A *general* knowledge of my past faults and follies you have long had; but, from no unworthy motive, I have shrunk from talking to you of any *particular* one: and I feel pained and shocked, my beloved wife, to know that you are aware of that lady's having once been very near, if not very dear, to me in the days of my early youth."

"Enough," said I, "enough! Forget that I know any thing which you wished me *not* to know, and assure yourself that I will forget also."

"You are a wise and good girl," he replied, kindly pressing the arm that re-

posed in his; but my little aunt is capable of making much mischief between married persons, where the mind of the wife is weak, and her temper suspicious."

But how irritated I was against Lord Charles that evening! He forced conversation with Pendarves whenever we passed him, and gave Lady Bell an opportunity of fixing her dark eyes on him in a manner which having once seen, I took care never to see again. I am sure it offended him as much as it did me; for though Lady Bell was not absolutely excluded society, she was by no means a woman to be forced on the notice of any man who had a virtuous wife leaning on his arm; and in returning her bow, Pendarves had done all that civility required of him: but I am convinced that Lord Charles wished to give me pain; and he was also in hopes that I should resent the appearance of any acquaintance re-

maining between the quondam lovers, and thereby occasion a coolness between my husband and myself.

This was the longest and the only painful evening I had ever passed at Ranelagh; and from that momnet I took such a dislike to it, that I was very glad when the great heat of the weather made my usual companions at such places substitute Vauxhall for Ranelagh. But at Vauxhall the same lovely and unwelcome vision crossed my path; and I once overheard a gentleman say, looking back at my husband, who had stopt to speak to some ladies, "What a lucky fellow that Pendarves is! The two finest women in the garden—aye, or in London, are his wife, and his quondam mistress." The compliment to myself was deprived of its power to please me, by these wounding words, my husband's "quondam mistress." And was then that disgraceful con-

nexion so well known? The thought was an overwhelming one, and I began to resent my husband's having bowed to this woman in my presence. But perhaps he was entreated to do so in order to shield her reputation? If so, could he do otherwise? And as I was always glad to find an excuse for Pendarves, I satisfied myself thus, and my recent displeasure was forgotten.

When we had extended the six weeks which we meant to pass in London to two months, I expressed a wish of returning into the country; and Seymour complied with so little reluctance, that I prepared to return home with a much lighter heart than I had expected ever to feel again. But Mrs. Pendarves had a parting gift for me in her own way—a piece of intelligence which clouded over the unexpected brilliancy of my home prospects.

"Well, my dear niece," said she, "I

am glad you are going, though I am sorry to part with you; for I do not like Seymour's friend, Lord Charles Belmour." He seems to me, my dear, to have, in the words of the poet,

> 'That low cunning which from fools supplies,
> And aptly too, the means of being wise.'

And I have thought no good of him ever since I saw him come out of Lady Bell Singleton's house with your husband."

"What!" cried I, catching hold of a chair, for my strength seemed suddenly to fail me, "does my husband visit Lady Bell?"

"Yes, that once I am sure he did: but then I do not doubt but that Lord Charles took him there; for I am told his great pleasure is to alienate his married friends from their wives."

Alas! from what a pinnacle of hap-

piness and confidence did this foolish woman cast me down in one moment! Reply I could not; and she went on to give me one *piece of advice*, and that was, never, if I could help it, to admit Lord Charles within my doors, and to discourage his intimacy with my husband as much as I could.

By this time I had a little recovered this overwhelming blow; and I resolved in *self-defence*, and in defence of my husband's character, to tell her I must believe she was mistaken in thinking she saw Pendarves come out of Lady Bell's house; but whether that were true or false, I must request her to keep such communications to herself in future, as a wife was the *last* person whom any one should presume to inform of the errors of her husband. But company came in; and soon after my uncle drove up to the house in his travelling carriage, and in a few

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minutes more they were both on the road to Cornwall. If Seymour, when he came in, had found me alone with Mrs. Pendarves, he would have attributed the strange abstraction of my manner to some information which she had given me; but he now imputed it to the head-ach of which I with justice complained; and when my visitors went away, he tenderly urged me to go to my chamber and lie down.

This was fortunate, as I should have disliked excessively to tell him what his aunt had seen, and to let him observe how uneasy the communication had made me; for I was aware that a wife whose jealousy is so very apt to take alarm, is as troublesome to a husband as one whose nerves are so weak that she goes into a fit at the slightest noise, and starts at the mere shutting of a door. Still, my husband's ignorance of the cause of my in-

disposition was a great trial to me; for it forced me to have, for the *first time*, a secret from him. And *he* too, it seemed, was keeping a secret *from me;* for, spite of my entreaties that he would always tell me himself what it might grieve me to hear from others, he had called on Lady Bell Singleton, without telling me that he had done so!

Alas! I did indeed lie down, and I did indeed darken my room; but it was to hide my agitation and my tears: nor till Pendarves went out to dinner, which, with some difficulty I prevailed on him to do, did I suffer the light to penetrate into my apartments, or my swollen eyelids to be seen of any one. But then I rose; then, too, I rallied my spirits; for, in the first place I was cheered by my husband's affectionate unwillingness to leave me, and in the next I had nearly convinced myself that Mrs. Pendarves

had not seen him when she fancied she did.

By this resolute endeavour to look only on the *bright side*, I was enabled when my husband returned, which he did very early, to receive him with unforced smiles and cheerfulness.

The next day we set off immediately after breakfast on our journey home; and I met my mother with a countenance so happy, that the look of anxious inquiry with which she beheld me was immediately exchanged for one of tearful joy.

"Thank God! my dearest child," she fervently exclaimed, "that I see you again, and see you *thus!*"

Why had she looked so anxious, and so inquiringly? and *why* was she thus so evidently *surprised*, as well as *rejoiced?*

No doubt, thought I, she is in correspondence with our gossiping aunt, and she has told my mother all she told me.

—No doubt, also, *she* has all along been that *secret source* whence was derived my mother's fear of uniting me to Pendarves.—But then, was not her information derived from her husband, and was it not always only too authentic?

As these thoughts passed my mind, it was well for me that my mother was talking to Seymour, and did not observe me.

Two months had greatly embellished the appearance of our abode; and it looked so green and gay, and was so fragrant from the summer flowers, that Pendarves, always alive to present objects and present impressions, exclaimed as we followed my mother through the grounds, "Dearest Helen! why should we ever leave this paradise of sweets? Here let us live and die!"

"Agreed," said I; and my mother looked at us with delighted eyes, but eyes that beamed through tears.

Calm and tranquil were the months that followed—though my husband's brow was always clouded when letters arrived bearing the London post-mark; and when I asked who his correspondent was, he answered, "Lord Charles;" but never communicated to me the contents of these letters.

In walking, riding, receiving and paying visits, passed the time till September, when my husband had an invitation to spend a few days in Norfolk, on a shooting excursion; and when he returned he found me confined to my sofa with indisposition. Never had woman a tenderer nurse than he proved himself during the three succeeding months: at the end of that time I was quite recovered; and as he had business in London, he declared his intention of going thither for some days, as he could not bear, he said, to leave me some few months later, and

when a time was approaching so dear to his wishes and expectations.

To London therefore he went, and left me to combat and indulge alternately the fears of a jealous and the confidence of a tender wife.

His letters became a *study* to me. I tried to find out by his expressions in what state of mind he wrote. Sometimes I fancied them hurried, and expressive of a mind not at ease with itself; then in another passage I read the unembarrassed eloquence of faithful and confiding love.

During his absence my mother found me a bad companion: I was for ever falling into reverie, and a less penetrating eye than hers would have discovered that my symptoms were those of mental uneasiness.

At length he returned, and he gazed on my faded cheek and evidently anxi-

ous countenance with such tender concern, that my care-worn brow instantly resumed its wonted cheerfulness; and when my mother came to welcome him, she was surprised at the alteration in my looks.

"Foolish child!" said she in a faltering voice, when Pendarves left the room, "Foolish child! to depend thus for happiness, nay health and life itself perhaps, on one of frail and human mould! I see how it is with you: you were ill and anxious yesterday, but *he* is come, and you need no other physician."

"Did you see much of Lord Charles?" said I the next day, looking earnestly for my needle while I spoke, as I was conscious that my countenance was not tranquil.

"No—yes—on the whole I did. But why do you ask? I believe he is no favourite of your's."

"Certainly not."

"But I hope, Helen, you are not so *very* a wife as to wish me to give up an old friend merely because he does not please *you*?"

"No: I am not so unreasonable, even though I could give substantial reasons for my dislike."

"And pray what are these reasons? Oh! that reminds me of a joke Lord Charles has against you, Helen. He tells me he is sure you thought that he fell in love with you when, on being first presented to you, he expressed his admiration in his usual frank way, which *means nothing*; for he says your prudery took alarm, and you drew up your beautiful neck to its utmost height, and have My lorded and Your lordship'd him ever since into the most awful distance."

"True; but for a manner that *means nothing*, I never saw a manner more offensive to a modest wife. However, I

am very glad he has been so clear-sighted as to my motives; for I wish him to know that I do not love such marked homage from him, or any other *friend of yours*, even in a joke."

"You are piqued, Helen."

"I am."

"Perhaps you wish me to call Lord Charles out? But indeed were I to call out all the men who look at you with admiring eyes, I should soon sleep with *my* fathers, or send numbers to sleep with *theirs*. No, no, excuse me, Helen. I will *not* quarrel with Lord Charles; for even if the fire ever was kindled, your snow has now completely extinguished it; and I do assure you he is a very good fellow, though odd, and not always pleasant."

"Is he paying his court to that Lady Bell?" said I, speaking her name with difficulty, and preceding it with an impertinent, *that*.

"I really—I—cannot say positively. But *that Lady Bell*, as you emphatically call her, has quarrelled with that fine young man whom you saw at Ranelagh, and perhaps it is on his account."

I said no more; for I saw his colour heighten, and that his manner was hurried: and I tried to believe that the quarrel was wholly on Lord Charles Belmour's account.

I now however took myself seriously to task; for was I not violating a wife's duty in trying to find errors in the conduct of my husband? and was I not by so doing endangering my own peace of mind, my health, and consequently, in my situation, my life? Was I not also depressing those spirits, and weakening those powers of exertion which ought to make home agreeable and alluring to the dear object of my weak solicitude?

The result of this severe self-examina-

tion was, that I resolutely determined to turn away from every anxious and jealous suggestion, to believe as long as I could, that my husband was as deserving of my love and confidence when absent as he was when present, and to make a *vigorous effort* to stop myself on my way to being a fretful, jealous, and miserable wife.

Nor did I break my resolution, as you well know, my dear friend; for, if I had, you would never have even fancied that I deserved to be exhibited as an example of a wife's duty. But if I had not begun to *school* myself when I did, all would have been over with me.

I cannot help observing here, that this painful jealousy, which I endured so early in my married life, was owing to my having, in despite of my mother's wise prohibition, united myself to a man of the steadines of whose principles I had had

too much reason to doubt; and I could not help saying to myself sometimes,—"If I had married De Walden, I should have had none of these misgivings."

As the hour of my confinement drew nearer and nearer, Seymour's tender attention increased; and at length, after severe suffering I became a mother; but scarcely had I been allowed to gaze upon my child, scarcely had I heard its first faint cry,—that sound which thrills so powerfully through the heart,—when its voice was stopt by death, and it closed its eyes for ever.

I am afraid I should have borne this affliction very ill, had I not been obliged to exert myself to quiet the fears of my husband and my mother for my life, as they thought that the shock might be fatal.

I had also to console them; for they

were both grieved and disappointed. But their feelings were transitory; mine were still in full force when they believed they were forgotten: for, besides the sorrow I felt for the loss of that being whose helpless cry still vibrated in my ears, I felt that I had lost in it a strong cement to the tie which bound my husband to me. Nor till I found myself again likely to become a mother was I really consoled.

A circumstance happened which induced me to conceal my situation; and this was an invitation which my mother received from the Count De Walden, to accompany his sister, and her husband back to Switzerland when they left England, which they were then visiting, and to stay some months with him and Ferdinand De Walden.

This invitation I well knew she would refuse, if she knew that accepting it would prevent her being with me during my

period of suffering; and I allowed her to depart for Switzerland, with the expectation of being returned time enough to attend on me.

I own that this was a great trial to my selfishness, as I knew I should miss her greatly: but I thought the excursion would be so pleasing a one to her, that I felt it my duty to make the sacrifice. I suffered my husband to remain in ignorance also, lest he should betray me to her: and I had judged rightly; for when I owned the truth to him, it was with great difficulty I could prevail on him not to write, and say I had deceived her.

Alas! I had but too much reason to regret even this deception, which might be called a virtuous one.

It so happened that I had no married friend, or near relation, who could come to be with me at that time; and as Pendarves wished me to have a female com-

panion, I was induced to accept the eagerly proffered services of a young lady, the eldest daughter of a numerous family, who had conceived a great attachment to my husband and me, and was very solicitous to be with me during my confinement.

This girl had such a warm and open manner, that I fancied her one of the most artless of human beings; and I was so weak as to consider the gross flattery which she lavished on me and on Pendarves, as the honest overflowings of an affectionate heart.

I was, I own, a little startled when she used to kiss my husband's picture as it lay on my table, when she became my guest, and when I saw her come behind him, and cut off a lock of his hair. But as she afterwards begged for a piece of mine, that she might unite them in a locket, I considered this little circum-

stance as nothing but a flight of girlish romance.

What Pendarves thought of it I know not; but he blushed excessively when he saw that I observed it, and tried to take the hair from her; on which a sort of romping ensued, that I thought vulgar, I own; but it called forth no other feeling.

Perhaps had she been handsome I should not have been so easy; but she was in my eyes plain, and could scarcely, I thought, be called a fine girl. Besides, I had heard Seymour say she was dowdy and awkward. But few men are proof against the flatteries and attentions of any woman who is not old and ugly; and I soon found, though without any jealous fear, that Charlotte Jermyn had power to amuse my husband, and that her enthusiastic admiration of every thing which she liked was a source of never-failing entertainment to him.

He now was sufficiently intimate with her, he thought, to venture to hint the necessity of a reform in her dress; and she wore better clothes, became clean, if not neat, and in time she even learnt to look rather tidy; while Pendarves was flattered to see the effect of his admonitions, and used to reward her by challenging her to a long walk.

At length, after I had been confined to my sofa some weeks, I had the happiness of giving birth to a daughter; and my young nurse was most kind and assiduous in her attendance upon me; indeed, so much so that she often shortened my husband's visits, on the kind plea that I was not yet strong enough to bear long ones from one so dear; and I, though reluctantly, dismissed him.

But I soon observed that her *own* visits became very short; that she used still to kiss me, and call me "dearest

creature!" and tell me how beautiful I looked in my night-cap: but now, when I asked for her I was told that she was gone out with Pendarves. And once, as he was standing by my bedside, she was not contented with saying he had been with me long enough, but she linked her arm in his, and dragged him away in a manner at once hoydenish and familiar.

I also saw that though she loaded my sweet baby with caresses when he was present, and tried to take her from him, she scarcely noticed it when he was absent.

Still I felt no distrust, because I had confidence in my husband's honour and affection. But I now saw that the countenances of my nurse and of my own maid, when I inquired for Miss Jermyn, used to assume an angry expression; and once my maid muttered, that she sup-

posed she was with her master, for he could not stir but she was after him.

This I did not seem to hear; but it made me thoughtful.

When I had been confined three weeks, I was able to leave my chamber for my dressing-room, which overlooked the garden; and one day, as I ventured to the window for the first time, I saw Charlotte Jermyn walking with my husband, and ever and anon hanging on his arm, almost leaning her head against him occasionally, and looking up in his face (he the while reading a book) with an expression of fondness which alarmed and disgusted me. I then saw her snatch the book from him; and as he tried to regain it, a great romping match ensued, and lasted till they ran out of my sight, and left me pale, motionless, and miserable. For I found that I had been exposing my husband to

the allurements of a coquettish romp; and though I acquitted both him and her of aught that was wrong, I still felt that no prudent wife would place the man she loved in such a situation.

Many, many a wife, it is well known, has had to rue the hour when at a period like this she has introduced into her family a young and seemingly attached friend.

What was to be done? I saw that the *servants* were aware of what was passing, and they would not judge with the candour that I did.

I therefore convinced myself that regard for my husband's reputation, and not jealousy, determined me to get down stairs and out again as fast as possible, in order that I might make some excuse for sending my dangerous attendant away, or at least be a guard over her conduct.

But, to my great surprise and joy, my beloved mother arrived most unexpect-

edly that morning; for I had insisted on her not returning sooner on my account, as I was so well. However, she did come; and I received her with rapture for more reasons than one; for now I had an excuse for sending Miss Jermyn away directly, as I wanted the best room for my mother.

Accordingly, I told her that in two days' time my mother would take up her abode with us for a few weeks; and that as Miss Jermyn had long been desirous of her return, I hoped she would hold herself in readiness to set off for home on the next day but one, as my mother always slept in the room which *she* occupied.

"O dearest Mrs. Seymour! do not send me away from you," cried the strange girl, clasping and wringing her hands, "or I shall die with grief; for I shall think you do not love me, and I shall never survive it!'

The time for my belief in such rhodomontade was now happily past, and I coolly replied, "that in no other but the best and most convenient room in the house could I allow my mother to sleep; therefore she *must* go."

"Why so, Mrs. Seymour? I can sleep any where. There is a press bed in the little room; and I care not where I sleep, so I am but permitted to stay."

Here she attempted to throw her arms fondly round me, while she repeated, "Do, there's a sweet woman, *do* let me stay!"

"Impossible!" I replied, disengaging myself with a look of aversion from her embrace. On which she started up and exclaimed,

"I am sure some one has been telling you stories of me, and you are set against me!"

"There is no one in this house, Miss

Jermyn, who would presume to say any thing to me against any guest of mine."

"And pray, does Mr. Pendarves know I am to be sent away at a moment's warning?"

"He does not yet know that you are going away at *two day's notice*, to make room for my mother, and that I may enjoy her society, after a long absence, *uninterrupted*."

"Oh! if that be all, I will promise never to interrupt your *tête-à-têtes*."

"They will not be *tête-à-têtes:* my husband will be of our party."

"And pray," answered she with great sullenness, "how am I to go home? I am sure Mr. Pendarves will not approve of my going home in the stage without a protector."

"Nor would his wife: and I will settle the mode of conveyance with him."

"Oh! if I must go, I will see if I cannot settle that myself."

At this moment my mother entered the room, and with her my husband; and Miss, to hide her disordered countenance, abruptly disappeared.

"What is the matter with Miss Jermyn?" said Seymour: and I told him, but in a voice that was not as assured as I wished it to be.

"So soon!" cried he, starting. "Is it not too sudden? Will it not look as if she was sent away in a hurry?"

"Sent away in a hurry!" exclaimed my mother, looking earnestly in his face. "Why should any one suspect that?"

"Oh, dear! No one ought, certainly; but after her having staid so long—However, I think she has been here long enough, and the sooner she goes the better."

"Then, as you think thus, and her mother has long wished for her, her departure shall remain fixed for the day

after to-morrow, and"—Here I was interrupted by Seymour's being called out of the room: he did not return for some minutes; when he did, he seemed disturbed.

During his absence the nurse brought me my child; and both my mother and myself were too agreeably engaged with her to talk of Charlotte Jermyn. But Seymour's evident abstraction and uneasy countenance drew my mother's attention to him; and after a moment's thought she said, "That seems a very strange presuming girl, Seymour; and I really think with you it is time she were gone."

"Oh, yes, certainly! and she is very willing to go."

"So much the better," replied my mother; while I suppressed, for fear of alarming her suspicions, the "How do you know that?" which was on my lips; for, if her feelings were so changed, he must

have changed them; and she it was who had desired him to be called out of the room.

Seymour's horses now came to the door; but before he left us I begged to know how he meant Miss Jermyn should travel.

"She came," said I, "in the coach which passes our gate; but then her mother's maid came with her, and I cannot spare a servant to attend her."

"I can drive her home in my curricle: if we set off at five in the morning, we can perform the journey with ease before dark."

Pendarves said this in a hurried conscious manner, which did not escape the quick eye of my mother; and while I hesitated how I could best word my decided objection to this plan, which would I knew excite disagreeable observations amongst the servants, that ever watchful

friend replied, " Hear my plan, which is far better than yours. The mornings are yet dark and cold at five: lend me your horses for my chariot; and as I want to visit a friend of De Walden's, who lives half way to Mr. Jermyn's, with whom I have business, I will take this opportunity of going. My maid shall accompany us, and while I stay at Mr. Dumont's she shall see Miss Jermyn safe to her father's."

" Well, if Miss Jermyn likes this plan."

" She would prefer going with you, no doubt," said I smiling; " but as this plan will be a convenience to my mother, we need not consult her wishes."

" O no! very true, very true," said he in a fluttered tone *(but not owning that he had promised to drive her)*: " and when I return from my ride, I shall expect to find you have arranged every thing with her."

He then ran down stairs and galloped off, as if to avoid speaking to Charlotte; for I saw her from the window run along the path to the road, to catch his eye if she could, and give him a signal to stop and speak to her.

Soon after she joined us; and I thought I saw a triumphant meaning on her countenance, which increased to a look of almost avowed exultation, when, on my saying, "Now let us tell you how we have arranged matters for your journey," she eagerly interrupted me, and exclaimed, "Oh! I have arranged that with Mr. Pendarves, and he is to drive me in his curricle."

I did not answer her, for her look disconcerted me; but my mother did, coldly saying, "Mr. Pendarves did mean to do so, but for my convenience he has changed his plan."

She then went on to inform her what

the new plan was; and the mortified indignant girl burst into tears, and left the room.

"That is a very self-willed, pernicious young person, I suspect," observed my mother: "but I flatter myself that her journey with me will do her some good; at least, if it does not, it shall not be *my fault*."

Then, being too wise and too delicate to say more, she changed the subject: nor was any allusion made to Miss Jermyn till Seymour returned on foot; for he left his horse at the stables; and as he saw us in the drawing-room, which was on the ground floor, he came in at the window, being impatient, he said, to welcome me *down stairs*.

But he had probably another reason for that mode of entrance. He feared, I suspect, that Charlotte Jermyn would want to speak to him, and he was not

disposed to listen to her reproaches for having given up his design of driving her home.

My suspicions were confirmed by my seeing her walking along the path which commanded the approach to the house; and this path Seymour had avoided by going to the stables: but she did not long remain there, for on looking towards the house she saw my husband standing at the window with me, with one arm round my waist, while with his disengaged hand he was stroking the cheek of the child which I held to my bosom, and was rocking to rest.

Happy as I was at this moment, I could not help throwing a hasty glance towards this strange girl, who now rapidly drew near; and as she passed the window curtsied to us, with a countenance in which every unamiable feeling seemed to be uppermost.

She then threw open the hall door with violence, threw it to with the same force, then ran to her own chamber, and closed the door of that with such energy that it could be heard all over the house. Nor did we see her again till dinner, when, though she had taken uncommon pains with her dress, her eyes were swelled with crying, and her whole appearance so indicative of gentle sorrow that Seymour's voice softened even into tenderness when he addressed her, and mine was consequently as strikingly cold and severe. Meanwhile, my mother was a silent but an *observant* spectator; and both Pendarves and Miss Jermyn seemed oppressed by the penetrating glance of her eye.

In the evening Seymour proposed reading to us aloud; and as I wished to sit up late for reasons you may easily guess, I was glad of so good an excuse as staying

to hear an interesting book would be: but I had reason to repent having allowed feeling to prevail over prudence; for when my mother came to me the next day she found I had caught cold, and, together with the fatigue of sitting up too late, was in no condition to go down that day *at all*. Nor could my mother bear to leave me: consequently, I had the mortification of finding that in trying to avoid a slight evil I had fallen into a greater. But my mother, who had, I doubt not, heard from her maid what the servants had observed, requested Miss Jermyn would be so kind as to sit with us, and teach her two sorts of work which she excelled in; and she could not without great incivility refuse compliance. However, at the hour when she was accustomed to walk with Seymour, she started up, declaring she could stay no longer, because it was her last day there,

and she was sure Mr. Pendarves would walk with her. We could not object to this on any proper ground; and she was putting her knitting and her netting into her work bag, when we heard a carriage drive to the door, and a servant came up to inform me that Lord Charles Belmour was below, and his master desired him to say he meant to dine with us.

Little did I think that Lord Charles would ever be a welcome guest to me; but at this moment he was so, for I saw that Charlotte Jermyn looked disappointed. My joy however vanished when I recollected that it was by no means desirable Lord Charles should witness this indiscreet girl's evident attachment to Pendarves; and just before she went to her own apartment, my mother said, to my great relief, "You must then dine with us to-day, Miss Jermyn; for you are too young and too old at the same

time to be the only female at a table where Lord Charles Belmour is."

"Well, if I *must*, I must," was her reply; and she left us.

But while I was rejoicing that circumstances would force her to dine with us, I heard her rapidly ascending the stairs and throwing open the door hastily, she told us, with a look of delight, that she was going to walk; for Lord Charles had brought his sister Lady Harriet with him, whom he was conveying home from school for the holidays, and Mr. Pendarves had told her she must do the honours to the young lady as *I* was not able to attend her. "And *so*," she added, "I must also dine below, for he *told* me so." And without waiting for our opinion or reply, she again disappeared, and we soon after saw her laughing with Lord Charles on the lawn, as if she had know him for years.

"How he will *show her off*," said my mother, "to-day! That young man has more ingenious malignity about him than any one I ever saw. When I was nursing Seymour at Oxford, he came to see him; and in order to make the poor invalid laugh, he used to make masters, deans, and fellow-commoners pass in rapid succession before us, like the distorted figures in a magic lantern."

This view of what was likely to happen was a relief to my mind; for I had not expected that Lord Charles would try to draw her forth for his own amusement; I had feared he would be contented to amuse himself with observing her admiration of Pendarves.

When they returned fro mtheir walk, I was vexed to observe that Lady Harriet held her brother's arm, not my husband's; and I also saw that Charlotte leaned on him, and looked up in his face in the

same improper manner as she did when they were alone. I was very glad that Lord Charles and his sister walked before them.

Pendarves now came up stairs to beg, as I was not able to dine below, or see Lord Charles otherwise, that I would go to the window and kiss my hand to him in token of welcome; for that he was afraid to stay, because he believed he was a disagreeable guest, and that I kept up stairs merely because he was come. He also begged that I would after dinner admit Lady Harriet for a few minutes.

I promised compliance with both these requests, and went to the window directly.

Lord Charles answered my really cordial salutation with a most lowly bow, and a countenance meant to express every thing that was respectful and courteous,

and drew from my mother, to whom he also bowed, the observation of "Graceful coxcomb! Now do I fancy him saying within himself, 'There, I have made that haughty old woman believe that I respect her and her loftiness to her heart's content.'"

Pendarves could not help smiling at this right reading, as it probably was, of his satirical friend's thoughts: but he assured her that admiration the most unbounded was, as well as respect, felt by his friend towards her; and that he considered a woman of her age as in the prime of her charms.

"Nonsense!" cried my mother; and my husband, laughing, returned to Lord Charles.

Charlotte Jermyn did not come to us before she went down to dinner, as she had Lady Harriet with her; but, when they left the dinner-room, I desired to

see them in mine: and for the first time I thought her pretty; for her cheeks glowed with a very brilliant and becoming colour, which added to the fire of her eyes; and her dress was neat and lady-like. She had the countenance, too, of one who had been much commended, and felt certain that the commendations were sincere.

"I am glad she is going to-morrow," said I mentally, and I sighed at the same time. Lady Harriet was a good foil to her, except in *manners*; for there there could be no comparison: and by the side of Lady Harriet, Miss Jermyn was pretty."

As soon as they had had coffee the brother and sister drove off, but not before Lord Charles had fixed to return that day fortnight to dinner, on condition of my dining below.

When they were gone my mother

went down to make tea; and after that meal was ended she asked if there was any objection to Seymour's going on in my dressing-room with the book which he began the night before, and in his reading till it was time for me to go to rest.

He complied instantly, and read till I was tired.

My mother then proposed that he should read me to sleep: to this also he agreed, and while I lay with the curtains closed round, my mother, he and Charlotte sat round the fire; and it was eleven before I ceased to hear, and Pendarves retired to his own chamber.

My mother then went away, desiring Charlotte to be ready at six, as she should breakfast with her at that hour. But, as I afterwards found, she reached our house on foot before six, and just as Pendarves came down stairs,

By these apparently undesigned circumstances my mother prevented any scene that might have called forth unpleasant observations in the family; but, she could not prevent a most sorrowful parting on the side of the young lady. She wept, she sobbed, she leaned against Seymour's shoulder when he put his lips to her cheek; and he was nearly obliged to carry her to the carriage; for she declared she would not go till she had taken leave of me: but my mother was as positive that I should not be disturbed, and Pendarves gently forced her to the door.

What passed between my mother and her when they were on the journey and alone,—for the maid always preferred travelling outside, — I do not know: but I suspect that she animadverted on her conduct and want of self-controul

in a manner more judicious than pleasant.

During these vexatious occurrences I must own that it was a sort of comfort to me, that my aunt Pendarves had such inflamed eyes that she could not write; for otherwise the chances were that she might hear some exaggerated accounts of our visiter's conduct, and might think it necessary to address one of us on the subject, and give us *good advice*.

Well: this pernicious girl was gone, and my mind at ease again. Still, I feared that she had done me a serious injury: not that I believed she had alienated my husband's heart from *me*, or from propriety; but she had been the first person to accustom him to find amusement at home *independent of me* and of the exertion of my talents. He was an indolent man, and she had amused

him, and beguiled away his hours, without obliging him to any *exertion of mind*. Besides, she was not only a new companion, but a new conquest. He was certainly flattered by it, and evidently interested. I was led to draw these conclusions by observing the gapish state into which Pendarves fell the day of her departure. He seemed to miss an accustomed dram. He gave me indeed, on my requesting it, a lesson in Spanish, which I had long neglected; but he seemed to do it as if it was a trouble, and he was too absent to make the lesson of much use. I however forbore to remark what I could not but painfully feel, and I fancied that my best plan would be to contrive some new objects of interest at home, if I could: but on second thoughts I resolved to propose that he should visit a sick friend of his at Malvern hills, for a few days, as I

believed it not to be for my interest he should stay to contrast his *present* with his *late* home; but that he should go away to return from *an invalid* and the *cold* hills of *Malvern*, to me and his own comfortable dwelling.

I no sooner named my plan to him than he eagerly caught at it, declaring that he had wished to go, but feared that I should think the wish unkind. Accordingly, he only staid to see my mother comfortably settled as my guest, and then set off for Malvern. Nor did he return till three or four days before he expected Lord Charles. By that time I had recovered my bloom and my strength, and our infant had acquired *a fortnight's growth*,—an interesting event in the life of a young parent; and I assure you it was thought such by Pendarves: and while he complimented me on my restored comeliness, and held his little Helen in

his arms, I felt that he had no thought or wish beyond those whom he clasped and looked upon.

I could now join him again in his walks, and in his rides or drives.

My mother threw a great charm over our evenings by her descriptions of the country which she had so lately seen, and of the scientific men with whom she had associated. But Seymour and I both fancied that she was rather reserved and embarrassed when she talked of Count De Walden. Nor could I help being desirous of finding out the reason. One day I told her how sorry I was to think that she shortened her agreeable visit entirely on my account; but, as if thrown off her guard, she eagerly replied, "Oh, no! I was very glad of an excuse for coming away;" and this was followed by such manifest confusion of countenance and manner, that I suspect-

ed the reason, and at last I prevailed on her to confess it.

The truth was that Count De Walden, who had admired her in America, when she was a wife, as much as an honourable man can admire the wife of another, could not live in the same house with a woman still lovely, and even more than ever intellectual and agreeable, without feeling for her a very sincere affection; and as their ages were suitable, he made her proposals of marriage of the most advantageous and generous nature. But my mother could not love again: and though at her time of life, and that of her lover, she thought that mutual esteem and the wish to secure a companion for declining years was a sufficient excuse for a second marriage; still, she had an unconquerable aversion to form any connexion, and more especially one which would remove her to such a di-

stance from me. When she told me how strongly she had been solicited, and that the advantages which she should ultimately secure to *me* by this union were held up to her in so seducing a light, as nearly once to overset her resolution, I was so overcome by the thought of the escape which I had had, that I threw my arms round her, and bursting into an agony of tears exclaimed, " What could have ever made me amends for losing you? The very idea of it kills me."

My mother was excessively affected when I said this; but I soon saw that her tears were not tears of tenderness alone; and looking at me with an expression of sadness on her countenance, she said, " Two years ago, my poor child, you would have better borne the idea of such a separation; and had I been a jealous person I should have been hurt to see how completely a husband can su-

persede even a mother. But I was pleased to see this, because I saw in it a proof that you were a happy wife: but perhaps you have now an idea, though still a happy wife I trust, of the great *value of a parent*, and can appreciate more justly *that love* which nothing can ever alienate, or ever render less."

"What could I answer her, and how?" I did not attempt to speak, but I continued to hold her in my arms, and at last I could utter, "No, no, I never, never can bear to part with you."

That day Lord Charles Belmour came, according to his promise, and just as I had convinced myself that it was my duty to overcome my dislike to him, and to endeavour to convert him from an enemy into a friend. Accordingly, I went down to dinner prepared to receive him even with smiles; but recollecting, when I saw him, his impudent assertion,

that his admiration of me had *meant nothing*, and that I was an alarmed prude, my usual coldness came over me, while the deepest blushes dyed my cheeks.

However, I extended my hand to him, which he kissed and pressed; and as he relinquished it he turned up his eyes and muttered "Angelic woman!" in a manner so equivocal, that, consistent as it seemed with "his joke against me," I could not help giving way to evident laughter.

Lord Charles was too quick of apprehension to be affronted at my mirth; on the contrary he felt assured and flattered by it. He had expressed his admiration only in *derision* and *impertinence*, and as he saw that I *understood* him, he felt we were much nearer being friends than we had ever been before; and when our eyes met, a look almost amounting to one of kindness passed between us. Lord

Charles now became particularly animated; but some allusion which he made to Lady Bell Singleton, while addressing my husband, made me distrustful again, and I relapsed into my usual manner; and he was *My lord*, and *Your lordship*, during the rest of the dinner. Nor could I be insensible to the look of menace which I subsequently beheld in his countenance. It was not long before the storm burst on my devoted head.

"My dear madam," said he in his most affected manner, "you are a prodigiously kind and obliging help-mate, to provide your *caro sposo* with so charming a *locum tenens* when you are confined to your apartments. I found my friend here with the prettiest young creature for a companion! and then so loving she was!"

"Loving!" said I involuntarily.

"Oh, yes. Allow me to give you an

idea of her." Immediately, to the great annoyance of my husband, with all his powers of mimickry, he exhibited the manner and look of Charlotte Jermyn, when looking up in Seymour's face, and leaning against his arm, as I had myself seen her do.

"Is not that like her?"

"Very," replied I, forcing a laugh.

"Now shall I mimick your husband, and show you how *he* looked in return? Shall I paint the bashful but delighted consciousness which his look expressed—the stolen glance, the—"

"Hush, hush!" cried Pendarves, anger struggling with confusion. "This is fancy painting, and I like nothing but portraits."

During this time I observed a struggle in my mother's breast, and I sat in terror lest she should say something severe to the noble mimick, and make matters worse.

But after this evident struggle, which I alone observed, she leaned her arms on the table, and fixed her powerful eyes steadfastly on Lord Charles, looking at him as if she would have dived into the inmost recesses of his heart.

It was in vain that he endeavoured to escape their searching glance; even his assurance felt abashed, and his malignant spirit *awed*, till his audacious and ill-intentioned banter was looked into silence, and he asked for another bumper of claret to drink my health. I was before overpowered with gratitude to the judicious yet quiet interference of this admirable parent, and the recollection of our morning's conversation was still present to me. No wonder, therefore, that my spirits were easily affected, and that I felt my eyes fill with tears.

At this moment I luckily heard my child cry; and faltering out, "Hark! that

was my child's voice," I hastened to the door; but unfortunately the pocket-hole of my muslin gown caught in the arm of my mother's chair, and Lord Charles insisted on extricating me.

I could now no longer prevent the tears from flowing down my cheeks; which being perceived by him, he said, in a sort of undertone, "Amiable sensibility! There I see a mother's feelings!" On which my mother, provoked beyond endurance, said, in a low voice, but I overheard it, "My lord, my daughter has a WIFE'S FEELINGS ALSO."

I was now disengaged happily, and I ran out of the room.

When I arrived in the nursery I found I was not wanted. I therefore retired to my own apartment, where I gave way to a violent burst of tears. I had scarcely recovered myself, and had bathed my

eyes again and again in rose water, when my husband entered the room.

He had witnessed my emotion, and he could not be easy without coming to inquire after me, on pretence that the child's cry had alarmed him.

This affectionate attention was not lost upon me, and I went down stairs with him with restored spirits, and in perfect composure.

My mother, who had walked to her own house, was only just entering the door as we appeared; therefore Lord Charles had been left alone; and whether he thought this an affront to his dignity or not, I cannot tell; but we did not find him in a more amiable mood than when we left him.

After looking at me very earnestly, while sipping his coffee, he came close up to me, and said, resuming his most

affected tone, " Pray! what eye-water do you use?"

" Rose water only," was my reply.

" Very bad, 'pon honour; I must send you some of mine, as you are a person of exquisite sensibility, and I fancy it is likely to be tried. Upon my word, it took me a week to compose it; and as I occasionally read novels, and the *Tête-à-tête Magazine*, (which is, you know, exceedingly *affecting*), I use it continually in order to preserve the lustre of my eyes; and you see that in spite of my acute feelings they retain all their pristine brilliancy."

As he said this, neither Pendarves nor myself, though provoked at his noticing my swelled eyes, could retain our gravity; for the eyes, which he thus opened to their utmost extent, were of that description known by the name of boiled gooseberries, and were really dead eyes, except when

the rays of satirical intelligence forced themselves through them: for the sake of exciting a laugh, he had now dismissed from them every trace of meaning, and consequently every tint of colour.

His purpose effected, he resumed his sarcastic expression; and turning from me with a look full of sarcastic meaning, he said, "Ah! *comme de coutume*—after tragedy comes *farce*."

My mother now asked him whether he had ever seen her house and garden; and on his answering in the negative, she challenged him to take a walk with her.

"I never," replied he, bowing very low, "refused the challenge of a fine woman in my life; and till my horses come round, I am at your service, madam." Then, hiding his real chagrin under a thousand impertinent grimaces, he followed my mother.

"I would give something to hear their conversation," said Pendarves, thoughtfully.

"And so would I: no doubt it will be monitory on her part."

"Monitory! What for?"

"If you do not know, I am sure I shall not tell you."

And with an expression of conscious embarrassment on his countenance, my husband asked me to walk with him round the shrubbery.

My mother and Lord Charles did not return till the carriage was driving up. We examined their countenances with a very scrutinizing eye; but on my mother's all we could distinguish was her usual expression of placid and dignified intelligence; that of Lord Charles exhibited its usual *cattish* and alarming look.

What had passed, therefore, we could not guess; but we saw very clearly, that

we should not be justified in joking on the subject of their *tête-à-tête;* and simply saying that it was beyond the time fixed for his departure, Lord Charles now respectfully kissed my hand, and told Pendarves he hoped he should soon see him in London. He then left the room without taking the smallest notice of my mother, and was driving off before my husband could ask him a reason of conduct so strange.

"Pray, madam," said Pendarves, when he returned into the room, "did Lord Charles take leave of you?"

"*He did not.*"

"Then I solemnly declare that before we ever meet again he shall give me a sufficient reason for his impertinence, or apologize to you; for there lives not the being who shall dare, while I live, to affront you with impunity."

"My dear, dear son," cried my mother, "look not so like, so *very* like—"

Here her voice failed her, and she leant on Seymour's shoulder, while he affectionately embraced her. Dear to my heart were any tokens of love which passed between my mother and my husband.

Seymour's strong likeness to my father in moments of great excitement always affected her thus, and endeared him to her.

When my mother recovered herself, she desired Pendarves would remain quiet, and not trouble himself to revenge her quarrels.

"Indeed," said she, "I am much flattered, and not affronted, by the rudeness of Lord Charles, as it proves that what I said to him gave him the pain which I intended. The wound therefore will rankle for some time, and produce a good effect. Nor should I be surprised if he were to send me a letter of apology in a day or two; for, if I read him aright, he has un-

derstanding enough to value the good opinion of a respectable woman, and would rather be on amicable terms with me than not."

"I hope you are right," replied Pendarves; "for I do not wish to quarrel with him: yet I will never own as my friend the man who fails in respect to you."

"I thank you, my dear son," said my mother with great feeling, and the evening passed in the most delightful and intimate communion. Nor, I really believe, were Charlotte Jermyn or Lord Charles again remembered. So true is it, that when the tide of *family affection* runs smooth and unbroken, it bears the bark of happiness securely on its bosom.

Shortly after Lord Charles's visit I was so unwell, that I was forbidden to nurse my child any longer, and I had to en-

dure the painful trial of weaning and surrendering her to the bosom of another. But most evils in this life, even to our mortal vision, are attended with a counter-balancing good.

At this time it was the height of the gay season in London, and I saw that my husband began to grow tired of home, and sigh for the busy scenes of the metropolis, whither, had I been still a nurse, I could not have accompanied him: but now, however unwilling I might be to leave my infant, I felt that it must not interfere with the duty which I owed its father; for my mother had often said, and my own observation confirmed the truth of the saying, that alienation between husband and wife has often originated in the woman's losing sight of the duty and attention she owes the father of her children, in exclusive fondness and attention to the children themselves, and

she often warned me against falling into this error.

She therefore highly approved my intention to leave my babe under her care, and accompany Pendarves to London, where she well knew he was exposed to temptations and to dangers against which my presence might probably secure him.

"Yes: my child!" said she, as if thinking aloud, for I am sure she did not intend to grieve me, "Yes, go with your husband while you can, and have as few *separate pleasures* and *divided hours* as possible; for they lead to *divided hearts*. But if you have a large family you will not be able to leave home. Go therefore while you can, and while I am with you, and turn me to account while I am still here to serve you. That time I know will be short enough!"

It is not in the power of language to convey an adequate idea of the agony

with which I listened to these words. Never before had my mother so pointedly alluded to her conviction that her health was decaying; and if the idea of separation from her by a happy marriage was so painful to my feelings, what must be the idea of that terrible and eternal separation?

Pendarves came in in the midst of my distress, and almost fiercely demanded who had been so cruelly afflicting me, fearing, no doubt, that I had heard something concerning him, and naturally enough conceiving that no great grief could reach me, except through *that* or *from him*.

My mother gently replied, "She has been afflicting *herself*, foolish child! I said, unwillingly I allow, what might have prepared her for an unavoidable evil; but she chooses to fancy, poor thing! that I am not mortal: yet, see *here*, Seymour!"

As she said this she turned up her long loose sleeves, and showed him her once fine arm fallen away comparatively to nothing!

I never saw my husband much more affected: he seized that faded arm, and, pressing it repeatedly to his lips, turned away and burst into tears—then folding us both in one embrace he faltered out, "My poor Helen! Well indeed might I find you thus!" But my mother solemnly promised that she would never so afflict me again.

In the midst of this scene a letter was brought to my mother. It was from Lord Charles, and was so like the man, that I shall transcribe it.

"Madam,

"I doubt not but you were amazed, and probably offended, at my quitting the house of your son-in-law

without taking any leave of you, as you are not a woman likely to think my silence at the moment of parting from you was to be attributed to the tender passion which I had conceived for your beauty and accomplishments. But, madam, if my silence was not attributable to love, so neither was it caused by hate; and I beg leave, hat in hand, and on bended knee, to explain whence my conduct proceeded. In the first place, madam, you had given me a blow, a *stunning* blow; and after a man has been *stunned*, he does not soon recover himself sufficiently to know what he is about, and how he ought to behave. In the next place, I endeavoured to remember how the great Earl of Essex behaved when Queen Elizabeth gave him a blow, or, in other words, a box on the ear (for *blow* I need not tell a lady of your erudition is the *genus*, and box on the ear the

species). Now, that noble Earl did not return the blow (which I own I was very much inclined to do), but he departed in silence from her presence, I believe; and so did *I* in imitation of *him* from *yours*. Methinks I hear you exclaim 'The little lord is mad! I gave him no blow.' Not with your hand, I own; but with your tongue, that 'unruly member,' as St. James so justly calls it; you gave me a tingling blow on the cheek of my mind, which it still feels, and for which perhaps it may be the better. It is this consideration, and the belief that your motives were kind, though your treatment was rough, and that you only meant, like the bear in the fable, to guard me from a slight evil, though you broke my head in doing it; it is *this* belief, I say, that now throws me thus a suppliant at your feet, and makes me beg of you to excuse all my rudeness, and all my

faults, whether caused by imitation of Lord Essex, or my own sinful propensities, and to raise me up to receive not the kiss of peace, for to that I dare not aspire, but to grasp and carry to my heart the white hand tendered to me in token of forgiveness.

" I am, madam,

" with the liveliest esteem,

" and the deepest respect,

" your obliged, though stricken servant,

" CHARLES FIREBRAND."

" Ridiculous person!" said my mother, when she had finished the letter, giving it to me at the same time.

When I had read it, I asked her to tell us what she had said to him. " And why," said Pendarves, " does he sign himself Charles Firebrand?"

" Oh! thereby hangs a tale," said my

mother blushing, "which I, I assure you, shall not tell: therefore ask me no questions. If ever Lord Charles and I meet again, the white hand shall be tendered to him. Nay, perhaps I shall answer his letter."

And so she did; but we never saw what she wrote: however, I am convinced, that she had CALLED him a firebrand, and reproved him for his evident desire of making mischief between my husband and me. Nor can I doubt but that the justice of her reproofs made them more stinging to the heart of the offender, and that he felt at the time a degree of unspeakable and unutterable resentment, on which his cooler judgement made him feel it impolitic to act; for he had, as my mother said, too much good sense not to value her acquaintance.

I must now return to Charlotte Jer-

myn. I forgot to say, that she wrote a very fawning letter of thanks to me after her return home, thanking me for my kindness to her, and hoping that I would send for her again whenever she could be of any service to me. I have reason to think that she also wrote more than once to my husband: but he never *communicated* what she wrote *to me;* and I had the mortification to find how vainly I had tried to give him those habits of openness and ingenuousness which can *alone* render the nearest and tenderest ties productive of confidence and happiness.

Now, after a silence of four months, she again wrote to me to inform me that she was married to a young ensign in a marching regiment quartered near her father's house; but as it was against her father's consent, she had been forced to go to Gretna Green, and that her father, Mr. Jermyn, continued inexorable.

This letter I communicated to my husband, who was, I found, already acquainted with the circumstance, though he did not tell me by what means he knew it. He also told me that her father had since assured her of his forgiveness; but told her at the same time, that he could bestow on her nothing else, as he had ten children, and a small income; and that the young couple had nothing to live upon except the pay of an ensign of foot.

"I am sure *I* can do nothing for her," Pendarves added; "for my own wants, or rather my expenses, are beyond my means."

"And were they not," answered I, "I do not feel that Charlotte Jermyn, or rather Mrs. Saunders, has *any claims* on you."

"Still, I would not let her starve, if I could *help* it; but I *cannot*."

I did not like to ask whether she had

applied to him to lend her money; but I suspected that she had, and that he had refused: for soon after I saw him receive a letter, which he read with an angry and flushed countenance, and thrust into the fire, muttering as he did so,

"Confounded fool, insolent!"

I felt, however, that her visit to me, and the terms which we had been upon, made it indispensable for me to give her a wedding gift, and I sent her money instead of a present in consideration of her poverty, desiring her to buy what she wanted most in remembrance of me. My letter and its contents, much to the annoyance of us both, she answered in person, bringing her husband with her; and they came with so evident an intention of staying all night, spite of the coldness of their reception, that we were forced to offer them a bed.

The next day, however, even their as-

surance was not proof against the repelling power of our cold civility, and they departed, neither of us prejudiced in favour of the husband, and leaving me disgusted by the wife's forward behaviour to Pendarves.

I now, according to my mother's advice, proposed to Pendarves a visit to London: but, to my great surprise, he seemed to have nor elish for the scheme; and telling me we would talk further about it, he dropped the subject.

Most gladly should I have welcomed this unwillingness to go to London, if I could have attributed it to a preference for home and for the country; but I had no reason to do this, and I feared it proceeded only from inability to meet the expenses of a London establishment, even for a few weeks; and of this I was soon convinced.

I told you a few pages back, that I

was so cruel as to rejoice in my aunt's being rendered unable to write, by a violent inflammation in the eyes; but as that did not deprive her of loco-motion, most unexpectedly one day, Mr. and Mrs. Pendarves drove up to my mother's door, and soon after she accompanied them to our house. I was dressing when they arrived, and I saw myself change even to alarming paleness when my mother came up to announce them. I also saw that she was as much disconcerted as I was.

"Oh! if my dear uncle had but come *alone*," said she, "the visit would have been delightful!" But, here we were interrupted by Pendarves, who came in with "So, Helen! I suppose you know who is come. Oh! that one could but transfer the disease from the eyes to the tongue, and bandage that up instead of the former! What shall we do? For,

probably, as she can't use her eyes, she makes her tongue work double tide."

"Suppose," replied I, "we bribe our surgeon to assure her that entire silence is the only cure for inflamed eyes?"

"The best thing we can do," observed my mother, "is to bear with fortitude this unavoidable evil; and also to try to remember her virtues more than her faults."

When I went down, I found my mother admiring her beaver hat and feathers.

"Yes," she replied, "I think my beaver very pretty. What is it the mad poet says about 'my beaver?' Oh! I have it—

'When glory like a plume of feathers stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the briny flood.'"

"Do you then bathe in the sea with your beaver on?" said my mother.

"Well! there's a question for a sensible woman!" cried my aunt, not seeing the sarcasm: then turning to me, she welcomed me with a cordial kiss; but I was struck by the great coldness with which she greeted Seymour.

My uncle, however, received us both with the kindest manner possible.

But I forgave all her oddness, when she saw my child; for praise of her child always finds its way to a mother's heart; and she was in raptures with its beauty. She pitied me too for being forced to give her up to a nurse; but she added, "I hope she is not, to use the words of the bard, a

> 'Stern rugged nurse, with rigid lore,
> Our patience many a year to bore.'"

Then renewing her caresses and her praises, she banished from my remembrance for a while all but her affectionate heart.

At dinner, however, she restored to me my fears of her, and my dislike to her visit; for she called my husband Mr. Seymour Pendarves at every word, though my mother she called Julia, and me Helen;—wishing, as I saw, to point out to every one that *he* was not in her good graces. But why? Alas! I doubted not but I should hear too soon; and, feeling myself a coward, I carefully avoided being alone with her that evening.

What she had to tell I knew not, and whether it regarded Charlotte Jermyn or Lady Bell; but I summoned up resolution to ask Pendarves whether he had ever visited Lady Bell Singleton in company with Lord Charles; and without hesitation, though with great confusion, he owned that he had.

"What! more than once?"

"Yes."

"Why did you not tell me of it?"

"Because I thought, after what you had heard, it might make you uneasy."

"Should you ever do," I replied, forcing a smile, "what in our relative situation it would make me uneasy to be informed of?"

"Not if your uneasiness would be at all well founded."

"But concealment implies consciousness of something indiscreet, if not wrong; and had you told me yourself of your visits to Lady Bell, I could have set Mrs. Pendarves and her insinuations at defiance."

"And can you not now?"

"Perhaps so; but no thanks to your ingenuousness. However, I must own," said I, smiling affectionately, "that no one answers questions more readily."

I had judged rightly in preparing myself for my encounter with Mrs. Pendarves, as she took the first opportunity of telling me how much she pitied me: for

she had heard of the affair with the young lady who came to nurse me in my lying-in, which was of a piece with the renewal of intercourse with Lady Bell Singleton. "But I assure you," she added, "his uncle means to tell him a piece of his mind; and if he does not, *I will*."

On hearing this I thought proper to laugh as well as I could; which perfectly astonished my aunt, as I knew it would do, and she demanded a reason of my ill-timed mirth. I told her that I laughed at her mountain's having brought forth a mouse: for that the *affair* with the young lady ended in her marrying a young ensign, soon after she left us, for *love*, and that I had given her a wedding present; and that I knew from Seymour himself that he visited Lady Bell Singleton: I therefore begged she would keep her pity, and my uncle his advice, for those who required them.

My mother entered the room at this

moment, and I had great pleasure in repeating to her what had passed: for I was glad to impress her with an idea that my husband confided in me. I saw that I had succeeded.

"Mrs. Pendarves," said she gravely, "I am sorry to find you are one of those who act the part of an enemy while fancying you are performing that of a friend. What good could you do my daughter by telling her of her husband's errors, had the charge been a true one? Answer me that. Surely, where '*ignorance is bliss*' '*tis folly to be wise*.'"

"But she could not be ignorant long—she must know it some time or other, and it was better she should hear it from a sympathizing and affectionate friend like me. However, I did not mean to be officious and troublesome, and I am glad Mr. Seymour Pendarves is better than I supposed he was."

"Madam," replied my mother, "Sey-

mour, like other persons, is better, much better than a gossiping world is willing to allow any one to be. And it is hard indeed that a man's own relations should implicitly believe and propagate what they hear against him."

"Take *my advice*, my dear little aunt, and always inquire before you condemn; which advice is your due, in return for the large store of that commodity which you are so willing to bestow on other people."

My aunt was silent a moment, as if considering whether in what was said there was most of compliment, or most of reproof. Be that as it might, she was too politic not to choose to *believe* there was much of compliment implied in the mention made of her willingness to bestow advice. She therefore looked pleased, declared her pleasure at finding all was well, and that she found even the *best authority* was not always to be de-

pended upon. At dinner that day, to show, I conclude, that Seymour was restored to her favour, she asked him to pay her a visit at their house in town; but on my saying that I expected she would include me in the invitation, as I wished to go to London, she turned round with great quickness and exclaimed, "What! and leave your sweet babe?"

The censure which this abrupt question conveyed gave a sort of shock to my feelings, and I could not answer her; but my mother instantly replied, "My daughter's health requires a little change of scene, and surely she can venture to intrust her infant to *my* care."

"Oh, yes! but how can she *bear* to leave it?"

"The trial will be great, I own," said I; "but I am not yet so *very* a mother as to forget I am a *wife;* and as I must either leave my child, or give up accom-

panying my husband, of the two evils I prefer the first."

"Oh! true, true, I never thought of that," was her sage reply; "and you are right, my dear, quite right, as husbands are, to go to take care of yours; and I *advise* you to keep a sharp *look-out*—for there are hawks abroad."

"Hawks!" said my uncle smiling, "turtle doves more likely; and they are the more dangerous bird of the two."

This observation gave Pendarves time to recover the confusion his aunt's speech had occasioned him, and he told me he was much amused to see that I had positively arranged a journey to London for him and for myself, without his having ever expressed an intention of going at all.

"But I knew you wished to go, and I thought it was your kind reluctance to ask me to leave my child which alone prevented your expressing your wishes."

"Indeed, Helen, you are right: *I* never *should* have thought of asking you to leave your child; and I own I am flattered to find I am still dearer to you than she is: therefore, if my uncle and aunt will be troubled with us, I shall be very happy to visit London as their guest."

"Is it possible," cried I, "that you can think of going any where but to a lodging?"

"Is it possible," cried Mrs. Pendarves, "that you can prefer a lodging to being the guest of your uncle and aunt?"

"To being the guest even of a father and mother; for when one has much to see in a little time, there is nothing like the liberty and convenience of a lodging."

"Well, well, Helen," said Pendarves, rather impatiently, "that may be; but *this year*, if you please, we will go to Stratford Place."

I said no more, and it was settled that

we should follow my uncle and aunt to town, and take up our residence with them. But the next day my mother, who thought the plan as foolish and disagreeable as I did, desired me to find out, if I could, why my husband consented to be the guest of a woman whose society was so offensive to him: "And *if*," said she, "it is because he cannot afford to take lodgings, you may tell him, that I have both means and inclination to answer all the necessary demands; and moreover I have a legacy of 2000*l.* untouched, which I have always meant to give you, Helen, on the birth of your first child; and that also is at your service."

I shall pass over my feelings on this occasion, and my expression of them. Suffice that my husband owned his "*poverty*, and *not his will, consented*" to his acceptance of our relation's offer; and that he thankfully received my mother's

bounty. The legacy, however, he resolved to secure to me, as my own property, and so tied up that he could not touch it. We found, however, that we must spend part of our time with my uncle and aunt; but at the end of ten days we removed to lodgings near them.

I was soon sensible of the difference between the present time in London and the past. I found that Pendarves, though his manner was as kind as ever, used to accept in succession engagements in which I had no share; and if it had not been for the society of Mr. and Mrs. Ridley, and my uncle and aunt, I should have been much alone; and have pined after my child and mother even more than I did. Still ardently indeed did I long to return home; and had I not believed I was at the post of duty, I should have urged my husband to let me go home without him.

Lord Charles was frequently with us, and, had I chosen it, would have been my escort every where: but I still distrusted him; and I suspect that it was in revenge he so often procured Pendarves dinner invitations, from which he rarely returned till day-light; and once he was evidently in such low spirits, that I was sure he had been at play, and had lost every thing.

We had now been several weeks in London, and I grew very uneasy at my prolonged separation from my child, and at my mother's evidently declining health —besides having reason to think that my husband would have enjoyed London more without me; for Lord Charles took care to tell me often, that had *I* not been with him, Pendarves would have done this, and would have gone thither; always adding, "So you see what a tame domestic animal you have made of him, and what a

tractable obedient husband he is." There is perhaps nothing more insidious and pernicious, than to tell a proud man that he is governed by a wife, or a mistress, provided he has great conscious weakness of character; and Lord Charles knew that was the case with Pendarves. And I am very sure that he accepted many invitations which he would otherwise have declined, because his insidious friend reproached him with being *afraid of me.*

Ranelagh was still the fashion, and my husband had still a pride in showing me in its circles; but even there I was sensible of a change. He now was not unwilling to resign the care of me to other men, while he went to pay his compliments to dashing women of fashion, and give them the arm once exclusively mine. Still, these occasional neglects were too trifling to excite my fears or my jealousy, and I expected, when

we returned to our country home, that it would be with unclouded prospects. But while I dreamt of perpetual sunshine, the storm was gathering which was to cloud my hours in sorrow.

I had vainly expected a letter from my mother for two days,—and she usually wrote every day,—a circumstance which had depressed my spirits in a very unusual manner; and I was consequently little prepared to bear with fortitude the abrupt entrance of my husband in a state of great agitation: but pale and trembling I awaited the painful communication which I saw he was about to make.

"Helen!" cried he, "if you will not or cannot assist me, I am liable to be arrested every moment."

"Arrested! What for?" cried I, relieved beyond measure at hearing it was a distress which *money* could remove.

"Aye, Helen, dearest creature! There

is the pang—for a debt so weakly contracted!"

"Oh! a gaming debt to Lord Charles, I suppose?"

"No, no, would it were!—though I own that that way also I have been very culpable."

"Keep me no longer in suspense, I conjure you."

"Why, you know what a rash marriage that silly girl Charlotte Jermyn made."

"Go on."

"Well—her husband was forced to sell his commission to pay his debts: but that was not sufficient; and to save him from a jail, I had the folly to be bound for him in no less a sum than several hundreds."

"But who asked you? Are they in London?"

"They were."

"And you saw them?"

"Yes."

"Why did you not tell me they were here?"

"Because they were persons with whom I did not choose my wife to associate."

"Were they fit associates for you then?" was on my tongue, but I suppressed it; for mistaken indeed is the wife who thinks reproach can ever do aught but alienate the object of it.

"But did you often visit them? and what made them presume to apply to you?"

"Necessity. She wrote to me again and again, and she way-laid me too—what could I do? I was never proof against a woman's tears—and I was bound for him."

"Well, and what then?"

"Why, the rascal is gone off, and left his wife without a farthing, to maintain herself as she can."

"Is she in London?" cried I, turning very faint.

"No, at Dover; but, as soon as it is known that he is off, I expect to be arrested for the money; and for me to raise it is impossible; but you, Helen—"

"Yes, yes—I understand you," I replied, speaking with great difficulty: "the legacy — I will drive instantly to the banker's — and take it, take *it all*, if you wish."

Here my voice and even my eye-sight totally failed me, and almost my intellects; but I neither fell nor *fainted*.—Miserable suspicions and *certain* anxiety came over me, and in one *moment* life seemed converted into a dreary void. My situation alarmed Pendarves almost to phrensy. He rung for the servants, sent for the nearest surgeon, without my being able to oppose any thing he ordered—for I could not speak: and I was carried

to my room, and even bled, before I had the power of uttering a word.

"The lady has undergone a violent shock," said the surgeon; and the conscience-stricken Seymour ran out of the room in an agony too mighty for expression.

I was now forced to swallow some strong nervous medicine; and at length, feeling myself able to speak again, I ejaculated "Thank God!" and fell into a passion of tears, which considerably relieved me.

My kind but officious maid had meanwhile sent for Mrs. Pendarves, who eagerly demanded the original cause of my seizure.

"Dearest Helen, do you tell your aunt," said Seymour, "how it was."

"I had been fretting for two days," I replied, "on account of my mother's silence; and while I was talking to Sey-

mour, this violent hysterical seizure came over me. Indeed, I had experienced all the morning, my love, *previous to your coming in*, a most unusual depression." This statement, though true, was I own deceptive; but I could not tell all the truth without exposing my husband.—Oh! how fondly did his eyes thank me! My aunt was satisfied; she insisted on sitting by my bedside while I slept;—for an anodyne was given me,—and I consented to receive her offered kindness. Nay, I must own that, in the conscious desolation of my heart at that moment, I felt strangely soothed by expressions of kindness, and was covetous of those endearments from her which before I had wished to avoid. But my hand now returned and courted the affectionate pressure of hers; and I seemed to cling to her as a friend who, if she knew all, would have sorrowed over me like a mother; and while

sleep was consciously stealing over me, I was pleased to know that she was watching beside my pillow.

I had forbidden Pendarves to come near me, because the sight of his distress prevented my recovery, and perfect quiet was enjoined.

But, when I was asleep he would not be kept from the bedside; and he betrayed so much deep feeling, and exhibited so much affection for me, that when I woke, and desired to rise and dress, as I was quite recovered, my aunt was lavish in his praise, and declared she was now convinced he was the best of husbands.

Pendarves would fain have staid at home with me that day; but I insisted on his going out, as I thought it would be better for us both; and I told him with truth that I preferred his aunt's company to his. Our next meeting alone

was truly painful; for we could neither of us advert to my excessive emotion. He could not explain away its cause, nor could I name it: but he, though silent, was affectionate and attentive, and I tried to force my too busy fancy to dwell only on what I knew and saw, and not to fly off to sources of disquiet, which spite of appearances might really not exist.

The next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we drove to the banker's, resumed the whole of the deposit, and I insisted that Pendarves should accept it all. This he was very unwilling to do—but I was firm, and my mind was tranquillized by his consenting at last to my desire. Yet, I *think* I was not foolish enough to suppose I could buy his constancy.

One thing which I said to him I instantly repented. I asked him whether Mrs. Saunders was likely to remove to

London. He said, he did know: "But if she does, what then? O Helen! can you suppose I will ever see her *now?*" he added.

"And why *not?*" thought I, when he quitted me—"If it was ever proper to see her, why not *now?* And why should I seem to be accusing him, by appearing solicitous to know whether he would see her or not?"

Alas! his reply only served to make me more wretched; but, fortunately I may say, my mother's continued silence made a sort of diversion to my thoughts, and substituted tender for bitter anxiety.

That very day the demand was made on my husband by the creditor of Saunders, and while he was gone out with this man on business in bustled my kind but mischievous aunt.

"How are you to-day," said she, "my poor child? but I see how you are—*sit-*

ting like patience in a monument, smiling with grief!"

"With grief! dear aunt?"

"Yes: for do you think I do not know all? Oh, the wicked man!"

"Whom, madam, do you call wicked?"

"Your husband, child: has he not been keeping up an acquaintance with that girl, who married? and has he not been bound for her husband? and is not the man run away, and he liable to be arrested for the debt? and where he can get the money to pay it I can't guess—I am sure *my* Mr. Pendarves will not pay it. Nay, *I* know 'tis all, all true—my maid, I find, met him walking in the park with her, and the creditor is *my maid's brother*."

Here she paused exhausted with her own vehemence; and I replied, "I am sorry, madam, that you listen to tales told you by your servant: I am also sorry

that a transaction which though rash was kind, is known to more persons than my husband and me. I know as well as you that Pendarves visited at Mrs. Saunders's lodgings, and he was very likely seen in the park with her. To the money transaction I am also privy, and I assure you my Mr. Pendarves need not apply to *yours* on this or, I trust, on *any* occasion; for the creditor has been here, and he is paid by this time."

"Then he must have borrowed the money, for I *know* he has lost a great deal lately."

"Mrs. Pendarves," said I, rising with great agitation, "I will not allow you to speak thus of the husband whom I love and honour. I tell you that he has paid the creditor with his *own* money; and if you persist in a conversation so offensive to me, I will quit the room."

"How! this to *me*? Do you consider who I am—and our relationship?"

"You are the wife of my great uncle, madam, no *more;* and were you even *my mother*, I would not sit and listen tamely to aspersions of my husband, and I must desire that our conversations on this subject may end here."

I believe there is nothing more formidable while it lasts, than the violence of those who are habitually mild—because surprise throws the persons who are attacked off their guard; and it also magnifies to them the degree of violence used.

The poor little woman was not only awed into silence, but affected unto tears; and I was really obliged to sooth her into calmness, declaring that I was sure she meant well, and that I had never doubted the goodness of her heart.

The next day brought the long expected letter from my mother; and its contents made all that I had yet endured

light, in comparison; for they alarmed me for the life of my child! She was, however, declared out of danger for the present, when my mother wrote.

It is almost needless to add, that as soon as horses could be procured, Pendarves and I were on the road home.

I must pass rapidly over this part of my narrative. Suffice, that she vacillated between life and death for three months; that then she was better, and my husband left me to join Lord Charles at Tunbridge Wells, whither he had been ordered for his health; that he had not been gone a fortnight, when her worst symptoms returned, and my mother wrote to him as follows:

"Come instantly, if you wish to see your child alive, and preserve the senses of your wife! When all is over, your presence alone can, I believe, save her from distraction. J. P."

He instantly set off for home, and arrived at a moment when I could be alive to the joy of seeing him; for my child had just been pronounced *better!* But *what* a betterness! For six weeks longer, watched by us all day and all night with never-failing love, it lingered on and on, endeared to us every day the more, in proportion as it became more helpless, and we more void of hope, till I was doomed to see its last faint breath expire, and——no more on this subject—

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I believe my mother was right; I believe that, dearly as I loved her, her presence *alone* would not have kept my grief within the bounds of reason: but the presence of him whose grief was on a par with mine, of him whom love and duty equally bade me exert myself to console, had indeed a salutary effect on me; and it at length became a source of comfort to reflect, that

the object of our united regrets was mercifully removed from a state of severe suffering, and probably from evils to come. But my progress towards recovered tranquillity bore no proportion to Seymour's; for, when I was capable of reflection, I felt that in losing my child I lost one of my strongest holds on the affection of my husband. Consequently, the clearer my mind grew after the clouds of grief dispersed, the more vividly was I sensible of my loss.

I also became conscious that the habitual dejection of my spirits, which was pleasing to Seymour's feelings while his continued in unison with mine, would become distasteful, and make his home disagreeable, as soon as he was recovering his usual cheerfulness. Still, I could not shake it off—and by my mother's advice I urged him to renew his visit to Lord Charles, who was still an invalid.

To Tunbridge Wells he therefore again went, leaving me to indulge unrestrained that pernicious grief which even his presence had not controuled, and also to impair both my health and my person in a degree which it might be difficult ever to restore.

When Pendarves returned, which he did at the end of six weeks, during which time he had written in raptures of the new acquaintances which he had formed at the Wells, he was filled with pain and mortification at sight of my pale cheek, meagre form, and neglected dress.

What a contrast was I to the women whom he had left! And even his affectionate disposition and fine temper were not proof, after the first ebullitions of tenderness had subsided, against my dowdy wretched appearance, and my dejection of manner.

"Helen!" said he, "I cannot stand

this—I must go away again, if you persist to forget all that is due to the living, in regard for the dead. I have not been accustomed lately to pale cheeks, meagre forms, and dismal faces. I love home, and I love you; but neither my home nor you are now recognisable."

I was *wounded*, but reproved and amended: I felt the justice of what he said, and resolved to do my duty.

Soon after he told me he was going away again; and on my mother's gently reproaching him for leaving me so much, he replied that he could not bear to witness my altered looks, and to listen to my mournful voice.

While Pendarves was gone, I resolved to renew my long neglected pursuits. I played on the guitar; I resumed my drawing, and sometimes I tried to sing: but that exertion I found at present beyond my powers.

After three weeks had elapsed, Seymour wrote me word that he was about to return from the Wells with some new friends of his, who were coming to the large mansion within four miles of us, which had been so long uninhabited, called Oswald Lodge. He said he should arrive there very late on the Saturday night; but that after attending church on the Sunday to hear a new curate preach, whom they were to bring with them, he should return home.

I was mortified I own to think that he could stop, after so long an absence, within four miles of home; but I felt that I had lately made so few efforts for his sake, that I had no right to expect he would pay me an attention like this. But to repine or look back was equally vain and weak; and I resolved to act, in order to make amends for what I could not but consider an indolent indulgence of

my own selfishness, however disguised to me under the name of sensibility, at the expense of my husband's happiness. And as six months had now elapsed since the death of my child, I resolved to throw off my mourning, and make the house and myself look as cheerful as they were wont to do.

I also resolved to meet him at the church, which was common to the parish whence he would come, and ours also, and not to sit, as I had lately done, in a pew whence I could steal in and out unseen; but walk up the aisle, and sit in my own seat, where I could see and be seen of others.

My mother meanwhile observed in joyful silence all my proceedings; and when she saw me stop at the door in the carriage on the Sunday morning, dressed in white, with a muslin bonnet, and pelisse, lined with full pink, and a countenance which was in a measure at least cheerful,

she embraced me with the warmest affection, and said she hoped she should now see her own child again.

Spite, however, of my well-motived exertions, my nerves were a little fluttered when I recollected that I was going to encounter the scrutinizing observation of Seymour's new friends, who, if arrived, would no doubt, from the situation of the pew, see me during the long length of my progress towards mine, which was opposite. They were arrived before me; for I saw white and coloured feathers nodding at a distance: but I remembered it was not in the temple of the Most High that fear of man ought to be felt, and I followed my mother up the aisle with my accustomed composure.

Oh! how I longed to see whether my husband was with the party! but I forbore to seek the creature till the dues to the Creator were paid. I then looked to-

wards the opposite pew; but soon withdrew my eyes again: for I saw my husband listening with an animated countenance to what a gentleman was saying to him, who was gazing on me with an expression of great admiration. I therefore only exchanged a glance of affectionate welcome with Pendarves, and tried to remember him and his companions no more.

When service was ended Seymour eagerly left his seat, and coming into mine proposed to introduce me to his friends; "for now," said he in a low voice, "I again see the wife I am proud of." I smiled assent, and a formal introduction took place.

The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Oswald, who after a long residence abroad were come to live on their estate, and resume those habits of extravagance the effects of which they had gone abroad to recover; of a Lord Martindale, the gentleman I had before observed; and of one

or two persons, a sort of hangers-on in the family, who ministered in some way or other to the entertainment of the host and hostess.

Mr. and Mrs. Oswald now politely urged my mother and myself to favour them with our company at dinner, my husband having promised to return to them by five o'clock; but we declined it, and Seymour attended us home. Seymour expressed more by his looks than his words the pleasure my change of dress and countenance had occasioned him; for he was too delicate to expatiate on what must recall to my mind only too forcibly the cause of the difference which he had deplored: but when he rejoiced over my recovered bloom, and *embonpoint*, I reminded him that my bloom was caused by my lining, and my seeming plumpness by my pelisse. This was only too true. Still I was, he saw, dis-

posed to be all he wished me; and when we reached our house, and he beheld baskets of flowers in all the rooms, as usual; when he beheld the light of day allowed to penetrate into every apartment, except where the sun was too powerful; when he saw my guitar had been moved from its obscurity, and that my port-folio seemed full of drawings; he folded my still thin form with fondness to his heart, and declared that he now felt himself quite a happy man again. Nor would he leave me, to dine at Oswald Lodge; and he sent an excuse, but promised to call there on the morrow and take me with him. The next day he summoned me to get ready to fulfil his promise, and I obeyed him, but with reluctance; for I felt already sure that I should not like these new friends.

In Lord Martindale I already saw an audacious man of the world; and those

spendthrift Oswalds, those beings who seemed to think they came into life merely to amuse it away, did not seem at all suited to my taste or principles, and were certain to be dangerous to a man of Seymour's tendency to expense.

On our way thither I asked if Lord Martindale was married; and with a cheek which glowed with emotion he replied, "Married! Oh yes! did I not mention Lady Martindale to you? How strange!" But I did not think it so, when I heard him descant on her various attractions and talents with an eloquence which was by no means pleasing to me.

"Indeed," said I, sighing as I spoke, "I feel it a great compliment, that you preferred staying with your faded wife to dining with this brilliant beauty."

"Brilliant beauty! dear girl! In beauty *she* is not to be compared to you. She is certainly ten years older, and never was a

beauty in her life. She has very fine eyes, fine teeth, fine hair, and a little round, perfectly formed person: *au reste*, she is sallow, and, when not animated, plain: in her expression, her endless variety, her gracefulness, and her vivacity, lies her great charm. Altogether *c'est une petite personne des plus piquantes;* and with even more than the usual attraction of her countrywomen."

"Is she French then?"

"Yes: she was well born, but poor; and her great powers of fascination led Lord Martindale, who was living abroad, to marry her, in spite of his embarrassed fortune. They came over in the same ship with the Oswalds, and thence the intimacy."

By this time we had reached Oswald Lodge, and were ushered through a hall redolent with sweets to the morning room, where we found Mrs. Oswald, splendidly

attired, stringing coral beads, and the gentlemen reading the papers. If there ever was a complete contrast in nature, it was my appearance and that of Mrs. Oswald. Figure to yourself the greeting between a woman of my great height, excessive meagreness, and long neck, and one not exceeding five feet, with legs making up in thickness for what they wanted in length, with a short neck buried in fat, and the rest of her form of suitable dimensions, while the dropsical appearance of her person did not however impede a short and quick waddling walk. Figure to yourself also, a fair, fat, flat face, full of good humour and betokening a heart a stranger to care, and then call to mind my different style of features, complexion, and expression, particularly at that melancholy period of my life.

"What a fine caricature we should make!" thought I; and it required all

my dislike to employ the talent for caricature which I possessed, to prevent my drawing her and myself when I went home. But I was ashamed of the satirical manner in which I regarded her, when she welcomed me with such genuine kindness; and ill befall the being whom welcome and courtesy cannot disarm of even habitual sarcasm! Mr. Oswald was as courteous and kind as his wife, and Lord Martindale *looked* even more soft meanings than he *uttered*—adding, "When I saw *you* yesterday, Mrs. Pendarves, I did not expect to see Mr. Pendarves return to us to dinner. Nay, if he had, I never could have *forgiven* him."

"My lord," cried Oswald, "*I* did not expect him for *another* reason, though I admit the full force of yours. He knew Lady Martindale was too unwell to dine below, for I told him so myself; and 'my fair, fat, and forty' here was not

likely to draw him from 'metal more attractive'"—bowing to me.

"So then," said I to myself, "his staying with me, for which I expressed my thanks, was no compliment after all; and disingenuous as usual, he did not tell me Lady Martindale would not be visible!" I am ashamed to own how this little incident disconcerted me. I had been flattered by Seymour's staying at home, but *now* there was nothing in it. Oh! the weakness of a woman that loves!

Seymour, who knew that I should be mortified, and he *lowered* in my eyes by this discovery, was more embarrassed and awkward than I ever knew him, in paying his respects and making his inquiries concerning the health of Lady Martindale, and had just expressed his delight at hearing she was recovered, when the lady herself appeared: she paid her compliments to me in a very easy and graceful

manner, and expressed herself much pleased to see the lady of whom her lord had raved ever since he saw her; and I suspect her broken English gave what she said much of its charm. At least I wished to think so *then*. I found Seymour had painted her as she was, as to externals; whether he had been as accurate a delineator of her mind and general manners, I was yet to learn.

That she could dance, I had soon the means of discovering; for she had a little French dog with her, which had been taught to dance to a tune; and while Mrs. Oswald played a slow waltz, and then a jig, Lady Martindale, on pretence of showing off the little dog, showed herself off to the greatest possible advantage.—Whether she glided smoothly along in the graceful abandonment of the waltz measure, or whether she sprung lightly on the "gay fantastic toe," her fine arms

floated gracefully on the air, and her beautiful feet moved with equal and as becoming skill. When she had ended, she was repaid with universal bravos and clapping of hands.

Nothing could exceed the grace with which she curtsied; and snatching the dog under her arm, she went round the circle, extending her beautiful hand to each of us, saying "*De grace! donnez des gateaux à ma Fanchon* * :" and the plate of macaroons that stood near us was immediately emptied before the little animal, who growled and ate, to the great delight of his mistress, who knelt in an attitude *fait à peindre* beside him.

I cannot express to you what I felt when I saw Seymour's eyes riveted on this woman of display. He watched her every movement, and seemed indeed to

* Pray give cakes to my Fanchon.

feel she possessed* *la grace plus belle encore que la beauté*.—But who and what was she? A French woman, and well-born, though poor.

Was it the quick-sightedness of jealousy, I wonder, or was it that women read women better than men do, where their love or their vanity is concerned, which made me suspect that she had been not only a *femme* de *talens*, but a *femme* à *talens*, and that Lord Martindale had married a woman who had been in public life? However, what did that matter to me? Whatever she was, she possessed fascinations which I had not; she had a power of amusing and interesting which I had never possessed; and I feared that to him who could admire *her I* must soon cease to be an object of *love*, though I might continue to be one of *esteem*.

* Grace more beautiful still than beauty.

But did I wish to please as she had been pleasing? Did I wish to be able to exhibit my person in attitudes so alluring? Would it have been consistent with the modest dignity of an English gentlewoman? Nay, would my husband have liked to see me so exhibit in company? Notwithstanding, to charm, amuse and fix his roving eye, and enliven our domestic scenes, I could not help wishing that *I* could do all *she* did. But I *could* not do it, and I *feared* her. We were eagerly asked to stay dinner, but we refused: however, another day was fixed for our waiting on them, so the evil was only delayed.

"And *what* were we doing? and *wherefore?* We were entering into dinner visits, and with a reduced income, with persons who lived in all the luxuries of life, and of whom we knew nothing but that ten years before they had been forced to run away from their creditors, and that

the chances were they would be forced to do so again. The *wherefore* was still *less* satisfactory to me. We did it that my husband might amuse away his hours; and, as I had reason to fear, forget in this stimulating sort of company and diversions the anxieties and the unhappy feelings which were in future likely to cling to him at home. For I was sure he was involved in debts which he could not pay, and those who are so involved are always forced to substitute constant amusement for happiness. If they do not, they fly to intoxication; but agreeable company and gay pursuits are the better intoxication, I own, of the two.

And was it come to this? Was my husband for ever unfitted for the enjoyment of domestic comfort; and was I reduced to the cruel alternative of seeing him abstracted and unhappy, or of parting with him to the abode of the Syren? while

I was sometimes forced to accompany him thither, and witness his evident devotion to *her*, his forgetfulness of *me?* Alas! such seemed to be my situation at that moment; but I was resolved to talk with him seriously on the state of his affairs, and to make any retrenchments, and offer any sacrifices, to remove from his mind the burthen which oppressed it. But for some time, like most persons so distressed, he was decidedly averse to talk on the subject, and liked better to drive care away by pleasant society, than to meet the evil though it was in order to remove it. In the mean while I went to Oswald Lodge occasionally, and occasionally invited its owners and their guests to our home, till the party there grew too large for our rooms to receive them: and then I had an excuse for not accompanying my husband often, in not having carriage horses, as I had prevailed on Pendarves to drop that unnecessary

expense. This produced urgent invitations to sleep there; but that I never would do; I would not consent to be with these people on so intimate a footing, especially as I had not my mother's countenance or presence to sanction it; she having resolutely declined visiting them at all, as she disliked the manners and appearance, as well as the mode of life, of the whole party. But she confirmed me in my resolution never to seem to *under-value*, though I did not *commend*, Lady Martindale, as she well knew my disapprobation would be imputed to envy and jealousy even by Pendarves, and she advised me to endure patiently what I could not prevent. Not that she for a moment suspected that my husband was seriously alienated from me, and was acting a dishonourable part towards Lord Martindale; but she could not be blind to Seymour's long absences

at Oswald Lodge, and his now passing nights there, as well as days. But his pleasures were, for a little while at least, put a stop to; for he received at length so many dunning letters, that he was forced to unburthen his mind to me, and ask my aid if possible to relieve his distresses. He positively, however, forbade me to apply to my mother, and I was equally unwilling to let her know the errors of my still beloved husband.

Yet what could I do for him? I could dismiss one, if not two servants,—and he could sell another horse; but then money was wanted to pay debts. There was therefore no alternative, but for me to prevail on my trustees to give up some of my marriage settlement; and as I knew that my mother's fortune must come to me and my children, if I had any I was very willing to relieve my husband from his embarrassments, by raising for him

the necessary supplies. Nor did I find my trustees very unwilling to grant my request, and once more I believed my husband free from debt. I also hoped that my mother knew nothing of either the distress, or the means of relief. But, alas! one of the trustees concluded our uncle knew of these transactions, and was probably desirous to know why he had, though a very rich man, allowed *me* to diminish my marriage settlement, in order to pay debts which *he* could have paid without the smallest inconvenience, as he had only two daughters, who were both well married.

Accordingly he mentioned the subject to my astonished and indignant uncle, who with his usual indiscretion revealed it to his wife. The consequenee was inevitable: she immediately wrote a letter of lamentation to my mother, detailing the whole affair, adverting to the other trans-

action concerning Saunders's debts, pointing out the great probability there was that what every one said was true, namely, that my husband had prevailed on Saunders to marry Charlotte Jermyn, and therefore was bound in justice to assist him, and concluding with a broad hint concerning his evident attachment to a Lady Martindale.

What a letter for a fond mother to receive! But to the money transactions alone did she vouchsafe any credit; and relative to these she demanded from me the most open confession, saying, "The rest of the letter I treat with the contempt which it deserves." I had no difficulty in telling her every thing which related to the last transaction; but my voice faltered, and my eye was downcast, when I described the other, because I had never been entirely able to conquer some painful suspicions of my own; and

her quick eyes and penetrating mind soon discovered, though she was too delicate to notice it, that in my own heart I was not sure that all my aunt suspected was unjust. But if I shrunk from the searching glance of her eyes, how was I affected when she fixed them on me with looks of approving tenderness, and told me with evidently suppressed feeling, that I had done well and greatly in concealing my husband's extravagant follies even from her!

That day's post brought a letter of a more pleasant nature from my uncle to me. He informed me, that though he utterly disapproved my giving to an erring husband what was intended as a provision for my innocent children, he could not bear that I should suffer by my erroneous but generous conception of a wife's duty, and had therefore replaced the sum which I had so rashly advanced, desiring

me on any future emergency to apply to him.

Kind and excellent old man! How pleasant were the tears which I shed over this letter! but still how much more welcome to my soul were those which it wrung from the full heart of Pendarves!

But amidst the various feelings which made my cheek pale, my brow thoughtful and sad, my form meagre, and which deprived me of every thing but the mere outline of former beauty, was the consciousness that my mother's heart was estranged from my husband. He had even exceeded all her fears and expectations; and her manner to him was full of that cold civility, which when it replaces ardent affection is of all things the most terrible to endure from one whom you love and venerate. He felt it to his heart's core, and alas! he resented it by flying oftener from his home

and the wife whom he thus rendered wretched.

At this period my mother was surprised by a most unexpected guest, and, situated as I was, an unwelcome visiter to both; for it was Ferdinand de Walden.

Business had brought him to England; and as time had, he believed, mellowed his attachment to me into friendship, he had no objection to visit my mother, and renew his acquaintance with me. But though she prepared him to see me much altered, as I had not, she said, recovered the loss of my child, he was so overcome when he saw me, that he was forced to leave the room; and the sight of that faded face and form, nay, I may say, the utter loss of my beauty, endeared me yet more to the heart of De Walden.

Had I been an artful, had I been a

coquettish woman, this was the time to show it; for I might have easily roused the jealousy of my husband, and perhaps have terrified him back to his allegiance. But I should have felt debased if I had excited one feeling of jealousy in a husband's heart, and my manner was so cold to De Walden that he complained of it to my mother.

Mr. Oswald called on De Walden, as soon as he heard of his arrival, for he had known him abroad, and a day was fixed for our meeting him at Oswald Lodge: nay, my mother, to mark her great respect for her guest, would have joined the party had she not sprained her ankle severely the day before.

It was now some weeks since I had dined there; therefore I had not seen the great increase of intimacy which was visible between Seymour and Lady Martindale, and which I dreaded should be ob-

served by Lord Martindale himself: but he did not seem to mind it, and looked at me with such an expression of countenance, lavishing on me at the same time such disgusting flatteries, that the dark eye of De Walden flashed fire as he regarded him, and he beheld my absorbed and inattentive husband with a look in which scorn *contended* with *agony*. But if Seymour was completely absorbed in looking at and listening to the Syren who bewitched him, *she* was not equally absorbed in *him:* but I saw that when he was not looking at her, she was earnestly examining De Walden, and that his eye dwelt on her with a very marked and scornful meaning.

Lady Martindale was solicited at the dinner-table to promise some new guests who were there, to exhibit to them the scene with the dog; but on pretence of having hurt her foot she refused. This

led to a conversation on dancing, of which art, to my great surprise, De Walden declared himself a great admirer in the early part of his life. "When I was very young," said he in French, "I saw such dancing as I shall never forget. It was that of a young creature on the Paris stage, who was then called Annette Beauvais, and she quite bewitched my young heart, both *on* and *off* the stage; for I once saw her in a private party, but then I was *quite a boy:* she was at that time the mistress of a *fermier général:* since then she has figured, as I have heard, in many different capacities, and I should not be surprised to hear of her as a peeress, or a princess; so great and versatile were her powers."

This discussion, so little *à-propos*, for what did any one present care for Annette Beauvais? convinced me De Wal-

den had a meaning beyond what appeared; and casting my eyes on Lord Martindale and his lady, I saw they were both covered with confusion: but the former recovering himself first, said, "Annette Beauvais! My dear Eugénie, is not that the name of the girl who was reckoned so like you?"

"*Mais oui—sans doute*—I was much sorry—for I was take for her very oft'—*et cependant elle est plus grand eque moi* *."

"She may look taller on the stage, my lady," said DeWalden, again speaking in French, that she might not lose a word; "but I would wager any money, that off the stage, no one would know Annette from you, or you from her."

"*A la bonne heure*," said she in a tone of pique, and avoiding the searching glance of his eye; then, on her mak-

* Yet she is taller than I.

ing a signal to Mrs. Oswald, she rose, and we left the dining-room.

With the impression which I had just received on my mind of Lady Martindale's former profession, or rather *character*, I could not help replying to the attentions which she now lavished on me with distant politeness; and I saw clearly that she observed my change of manner, and, resenting it in her heart, resolved to take ample vengeance; for, as I stood with my arms folded in a long mantle which I wore, lost in reverie, it happened that I did not answer Lady Martindale when she first spoke, and when I did, it was in a cold and absent manner, and as if I addressed an inferior; on which the artful woman, who sat in a recess by the side of my husband, threw herself back, exclaiming, "*Mais voyez donc comme elle me traite! Ah! comment ai-je mérité cette dureté*

de sa part *?" She accompanied these words with a few touching tears.

On seeing and hearing this, for the first time in his life since we married Seymour felt irritated against me; and coming up to me, he said, in a voice nearly extinct with passion, "Mrs. Pendarves, I insist on your apologizing to that lady for the rudeness of which you have been guilty." For one moment my spirit revolted at the word "insist," and my feelings were overset by the "Mrs. Pendarves;" but it was only for a moment.

I felt that I *had* been rude; and I also felt that I should not have acted as I did, spite of my suspicions, if I had not been jealous of Seymour's adoration for her.

Accordingly, drawing so near to her that no one could hear what passed, I told her that at the command of my hus-

* Only see how she treats me! How have I deserved such hard treatment from her?

band, I assured her I did not mean to wound or offend her, and that I was sorry I had done so.

"Ah! 'tis your husban spoak den, not your own heart—dat's wat I want."

"The feelings of my heart," said I, "are not at the command even of my husband; but my words are, and I have obeyed him—but I am really sorry when I have given pain to any one." Then with a low curtsy I left them, and retired to a further part of the room.

During this time I saw that Seymour looked still angry, and was not satisfied with my apology, or the manner in which I delivered it; and I repented I had not been more gracious. But now I was requested to sing a Venetian air to the Spanish guitar, to which I had written English words; and I complied, glad to do something to escape from my own painful reflections, and also from the earnest man-

ner in which De Walden examined my countenance, and watched what had just passed. But in order no doubt to mortify my vanity by calling off the attention from me to herself, the moment I began, Lady Martindale set her little dog down who was lying in her lap, and began to make him dance to the tune; but as she did not get up herself and dance as usual with him, the poor beast did not know what to make of it, but set up a most violent barking. I had had resolution to go on both singing and playing during the grimaces of the dog and its mistress, even though my own husband instead of resenting the affront to me had seemed to enjoy it; but when the dog spoke I was silent; on which De Walden seized the little animal in his arms in spite of Lady Martindale's resistance, and put it out of the room. Then stooping down he whispered something in her

ear which silenced her at once. During this scene I trembled in every limb; for I feared that Seymour might be mad enough to resent De Walden's conduct. I was therefore relieved when Lord Martindale came up to him, as if he meant to resent the violence offered to his lady's dog; but on his approaching De Walden, he said, with great good humour—"That was right, Count De Walden; and if you had not done it, *I* should. Only think that a beast like that should presume to interrupt a Seraph!"

"Ah! if but he it was alone presume in this room, it would be well; but we often make example of one who is guilty the least."

Lord Martindale did not choose to ask an explanation of these words, but, turning to me, requested me to resume my guitar and my song. But I had not yet recovered my emotion, nor perhaps would

it have been consistent with my self-respect to comply.

Certainly De Walden thought not; for he said in a low voice "*Ma chere amie, de grace ne chantez pas*!*" and I was firm in my refusal.

Perhaps it was well that I was not allowed to go on with my song, as the words were only too expressive of my own feelings, for they were as follows:—

SONG.

How bright this summer's sun appear'd!
How blue to me this summer's sky!
While all I saw and all I heard
Could charm my ear, could bless my eye!

The lonely bower, the splendid crowd,
Alike a joy for me possess'd;
My heart a charm on all bestow'd,
For that confiding heart was *bless'd*.

* My dear friend, pray do not sing!

But thou art changed!—and now no more
The sun is bright, or blue the sky;
Now in the throng, or in the bower,
I only mark thy *alter'd eye.*

And though midst crowds I still appear,
And seem to list the minstrel's strain,
I heed it not—I only hear
My *own deep sigh* that mourns in vain.

My carriage was announced soon afterwards; and I saw by the manner of both, that Lady Martindale was trying to persuade my husband to stay all night: but as De Walden came with us, propriety, if not inclination, forbade him to comply, and he sullenly enough followed De Walden and me to the carriage. When there, that considerate friend refused to enter it—declaring as it was moon-light he preferred walking home.

What a relief was this to my mind! for I dreaded some unpleasant alterca-

tion, especially if De Walden expressed the belief which he evidently entertained, that Lady Martindale and Annette Beauvais were the same person.

When he entered the carriage my husband threw himself into one corner of it, and remained silent. I expected this: still I did not know how to bear it; for I could not help contrasting the past with the present. Is there—no, there is not—so agonizing a feeling in the catalogue of human suffering, as the first conviction that the heart of the being whom we most tenderly love, is estranged from us? In vain could I pretend to doubt this overwhelming fact. Seymour had resented *for* another woman, and to *me!* He had even joined in, and *enjoyed*, the mean revenge that woman took, though that revenge was a public affront to *me!* And now in sullen silence, and in still rankling resentment, he was sitting as

far from me as he possibly could sit, and the attachment of years seemed in one hour destroyed!

All this I felt and thought during the first mile of our drive home: but so closely does hope ever tread on the heels of despair, that one word from Pendarves banished the worst part of my misery; for in an angry tone he at length observed, "So, madam, your *champion* would not go with us: I think it is a pity you did not *walk with him*—I think you ought to have done no less, after his public gallantry in your service."

"Ha!" thought I immediately, "this is *pique*, this is jealousy; and perhaps he loves me still!" What a revulsion of feeling I now experienced! and never in his fondest moments did I value an expression of tenderness from him more, than I did this weak and churlish observation; for he was not silent and sullen

on account of Lady Martindale's fancied injuries, but from resentment of De Walden's interference. In one moment therefore the face of nature itself seemed changed to me; and I eagerly replied, "I was certainly much obliged to De Walden—I needed a champion, and who so proper to be it as himself, the only old friend I had in the room, yourself excepted, and the only person in it probably who now (here my voice faltered) has a real regard and affection for me!"

"Helen!" cried Pendarves, starting up, "you *cannot* mean what you say! You do not, *cannot* believe that De Walden loves you better than *I* do."

"If I had not believed it I should not have said it."

"But how *could* you believe it? Has he dared to talk to you of love?"

"Do you think he *could* forget himself so far as to do such a thing? or if he did,

do you think I could forget myself so far as to listen to him? Surely, sir, you forget of whom and to whom you are speaking."

"Forgive me: I spoke from pique. And so, Helen, you think I do not love you?"

"Not as you *did*, certainly: but I excuse you. I know grief has changed me; and it had been better for me to have died, if it had so pleased God, when my poor child died."

"Helen! dearest! do not talk thus, I cannot bear it!" he exclaimed, clasping me to his heart; and though I then wept even more abundantly than before, I wept on his bosom, and all my sorrows were for awhile forgotten.

The next morning Pendarves told me he should certainly breakfast with me; but he must leave me soon to partake of a late breakfast at Oswald Lodge, as he

had promised to go with the party to call on a family, with whom they were to arrange some *private theatricals*.

"And are *you* to engage in them?"

"Oh! to be sure: it will not be the *first* time of my acting."

"And will Lady Martindale act?"

"Yes: but not with us. We shall act in English: she will favour us with a mono-drame, a ballet of action, and perhaps read a French play, which she reads to perfection."

"Not better than she dances, I dare say; for dancing, I suspect, was once *one* of her pofessions."

"What nonsense is this Helen? and who has dared to give such an erroneous and false impression of this admirable woman?"

"Surely you must have perceived that De Walden meant to insinuate that she and Annette Beauvais are the same person?"

"Then he is a vile calumniator."

"Not so: he is only a *mistaken* man."

"But it seems you think he *cannot* be mistaken: he is an *oracle!*"

"My love," replied I, "we had better not talk of De Walden."

"You are right, Helen, quite right; for I am conscious of great irritation when I think of him: for I feel, I cannot but feel, how much more worthy of you he is than I am; and *yet*, foolish girl, you gave him up for me. O Helen! when I saw him, impatient of affront to you, step forward with that flashing eye, that commanding air, to seize the offending brute, though I could have stabbed him, I could also have embraced him; and I said within myself, "And to this man Helen preferred *me!* How she must repent her folly *now!*"

"She never has repented, she never *can*

repent it," said I, throwing myself upon his neck. You know I took you with all your faults open to my view."

"Yes: but you fancied love and you would reform them!"

"I did—and I think that we may do so still: but you must not let me fancy you do not love me, Seymour; if you do, I shall pine and mope, and become the object of your aversion."

"Impossible! do you think I can ever dislike you, Helen?"

"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" said I, returning his embrace.

"I will hear no more of such horrible surmises: I have now outstaid my time."

Then mounting his horse, he was out of sight in a moment.

Soon after my mother appeared, and, to my surprise, unaccompanied by De Walden.

"Where is our friend?" was my first salutation.

"On the road to London."

"London! And why?"

"He had his reasons for going; and, as usual, they do honour both to his head and heart."

"May I not know them?"

"I would not tell them to all women under your circumstances; but I can trust *you*. He finds that he has not conquered his attachment; and that he cannot behold the affecting change in your appearance, and reflect on the cause, without feeling what his principles disapprove. Besides, he is afraid of getting involved in a quarrel with Pendarves, as, I suppose, you guess who this Lady Martindale is."

"I do. Well, I am glad De Walden is gone; for I know Pendarves will rejoice."

I then related to her my conversation

with my husband; and I did it with so much cheerfulness, and such an evident revival of hope, that I imparted some of the feelings which I experienced; and my mother's heart was visibly softened towards Seymour, while she uttered, "Poor fellow! he does indeed justly judge himself: you did prefer the brilliant to the diamond. But where is he?"

"Gone out with the party at the lodge on particular business; and will not return till night."

On hearing this my mother's countenance fell; and kissing my cheek, she shook her head mournfully, and changed the conversation.

Pendarves came home that evening in great spirits. Every thing was arranged for the theatricals, and the play fixed upon. It was to be the Belle's Stratagem, and he was to play Doricourt, a part he had often played before. The part of Le-

titia Hardy, was given to a young lady who was famous as an actress on private theatres; and every part was filled but that of Lady Frances Touchwood.

"Oh, Helen!" cried he, "how happy should I be if you would give over all your dismals, lay aside your scruples, and make me your slave for life, by undertaking this mild and modest part!"

"You bribe high," I replied (turning pale at the apprehension of any thing so contrary to my habits and my sense of right): "but you know my aversion to things of the sort."

"I do: but I also know your high sense of a wife's duty; and that you cannot but own a wife ought to obey her husband's will, when not contrary to the will of God."

"You seem to have *high* though *just* ideas of a wife's duty," said I, smiling;

" now, perhaps, you will favour me with your opinion of a *husband's* duty."

" Willingly. It is to wean a beloved wife, if possible, from gloomy thoughts; to keep amusing company himself, and to make her join it: in short, when he has engaged in private theatricals, it is his *duty* to get his wife to engage in them also: and if you think such things dangerous to good morals, you are the more bound to engage in them, in order to watch over *mine*."

I suspected he was right, and that the general duty should, in this instance, give way to the particular one; but I shrunk with aversion from the long and intimate association with these disagreeable if not disreputable people, to which it would oblige me; and after expressing this dislike I begged time to consider of his request.

The next day I went to consult my mother, who at first would not hear the

plan *named,* and declared that her child should not so far degrade herself as to allow her person to be profaned by such familiarities as acting must induce and she must suffer. But when I told her Mr. Oswald was to act Sir George Touchwood, a quiet, elderly married man, she was more reconciled to it on *that* score, but she disliked it as much as I did on other grounds. However, having convinced myself, I at length convinced her, that it was my duty to make myself as dear and as agreeable to my husband as I could, and not leave him thus exposed to the every day increasing fascinations of another woman.

"But can you, my child," said she, "have fortitude enough to bear for days together the sight of his attentions to your rival? Will it not make you pettish, grave, and unamiable, and cloud your eyes in tears, which will *incense* and

not *affect*, because they will seem a *reproach?*"

"It will be a difficult task, and a severe trial, I own; but I humbly hope to be supported under it: and though the risk is great, the ultimate success is worth the venture."

"Helen," said my mother, "till now I thought *my* trials as a wife *great*, and my duties *severe;* but I am convinced that they were easy to bear and easy to perform, compared to what a fond wife feels, who is forced to mask misery with smiles; to substitute undeserved kindness for just reproach; and to submit even her own superior judgement, and her own sense of right and wrong, to the will of her husband."

"But, dear mother! I shall be repaid and rewarded at last!"

"Repaid, rewarded, Helen! *how?* Who or what is to repay you? As well can

assignats repay bullion, as the love of a being who has grossly erred can reward that of one to whom error is unknown."

"But he has *not grossly* erred; and if he had, I *love* him," cried I, deeply wounded and appalled at the truth of what she said.

"Ah! *there it is*," she replied; "and thus does love level all in their turns; the weak with the strong, the sensible with the foolish. One thing more, Helen, before you go—You shall have your *mother's* countenance and presence to support you under your new trials: I will condescend to invite myself to attend *rehearsals*, and *I* will be at the *representation*."

I received this offer with gratitude, and then returned to tell my husband that I would perform the part of Lady Frances Touchwood.

He was delighted with my compliance;

and on making me read the part aloud directly, he declared that I should perform to admiration.

"I should have played Letitia Hardy better," said I.

"You! how conceited!"

"I got that part by heart once, and I have often acted it quite through for my own amusement when I was quite alone. But I prefer playing Lady Frances now, for the days of my vanity are pretty well over."

"No, no, child, they are only now beginning, according to this; and little did I think I had married a great actress."

Pendarves then departed in high spirits to his friends, and I sat down to *study my part*. But bitter were the tears I shed over it. And was I, so lately the mourner over a dying and a dead child, was I about to engage in dissipations like these?—But humbly hoping my motive

sanctified my deed, I shook off overwhelming recollections, and resolved to persevere in my new task.

For some days, and till all was ready for rehearsals, Pendarves rehearsed his part to me, and I to him; but at length he found it pleasanter to have Lady Martindale hear him, he said, for her broken English was so *amusing*.

I could not oppose to *this excellent reason* my being a better judge of his performance, but I was forced to submit in silence. Now, however, I was soon called to rehearsals, and my mother was allowed to accompany me.

My first performance was wretched, and I thought Seymour looked ashamed of me; but my mother said she should have been mortified if I had done better the *first time*. The next I gained credit; but on the third day I found the party in great distress. The Letitia Hardy had

been sent for to a dying father, and there was no one to undertake her part. You may easily guess that Seymour immediately told tales of me, and I undertook that prominent character: but I did not shrink from it, for my husband was to act with me; and Letitia Hardy was not more eager to charm Doricourt than I to charm my husband.

You know there is a minuet to be danced, and a song to be sung; and as Le Piq and Madame Rossi were the first dancers when I was young, I had taken lessons of both in London, and was said to dance a minuet well. Pendarves was equally celebrated in that dance; and as we rehearsed our minuet often at home, each declared the other perfect; nor was the little song less warmly applauded, which I substituted for the original, and adapted to a Scotch air. It applied to my own situation and feelings as well as

to those of the heroine, and was as follows:

SONG.

If now before this splendid throng
With timid voice, but daring aim,
I strive to wake my pensive song
And urge the minstrel's tuneful claim;
One wish alone the anxious task can move,
The wish to charm the ear of HIM I LOVE.

If in the dance with eager feet
I seek a grace before unknown,
And dare the critic eye to meet,
Nor heed though scornful numbers frown;
This wish to fear superior bids me prove,
The wish to charm the eye of HIM I LOVE.

And if, my woman's fears resign'd,
I thus my loved retirement leave,
My humble vest with roses bind,
And jewels in my tresses weave;
One wish alone could such vast efforts move,
The wish to *fix the heart* of HIM I LOVE.

The rehearsals meanwhile were pleasanter than I expected. My husband

was *forced* to be a great deal with me, as he had to *rehearse* so much with me; and Lady Martindale chose to practise her ballet in her own apartment, in sight of a long glass. Therefore I had not to bear, as I expected, my husband's complete neglect; and I could smile at the meanness which led her to come in while I was rehearsing, and lament, as she looked on, loud enough for Seymour and me to hear, that the *charmante* Henrietta Goodwin was summoned away, and could not perform the heroine, because she did it *à ravir*. I saw Pendarves change colour often when she said this, and she said it daily; but as he thought I much excelled Miss Goodwin, he attributed it to female envy, and perhaps to *jealousy* of me as *his wife*.

At length the first day of our theatricals took place, and a company far more select and less numerous than I expected

was assembled. My mother had insisted on defraying my expenses, and both my dresses were elegant. You must forgive my vanity when I say, that with rouge replacing my natural bloom, and clad in a most becoming manner, I looked as young and as well as when I married; while to my grateful joy my husband seemed to admire me more than any one. Indeed he pronounced my whole performance beyond praise, and I know not what any one else said. I made one alteration, however, in the text on the night of representation, which called down thunders of applause. The Author makes Letitia Hardy say, that if her husband was unfaithful she would elope with the first pretty fellow that asked her, *while her feelings preyed on her life*. I could not make my lips utter such words as these; I therefore said, "I *would not* elope like some women, &c. but would

patiently endure my sufferings, *though* my feelings preyed on my life."

Seymour was so *surprised*, so confounded, and so affected, that he seized my hand and pressed it to his heart and his lips before he could reply: and my mother told me afterwards that she could scarcely controul her emotions at a change so worthy of me, and so well-timed. The *next* representation was deferred for a week; and, whatever was the reason, Lady Martindale deferred any exhibition of herself to that future opportunity.

But the comfort and the joy of all to me was, that during this intermediate week I recovered my husband; and with him some of my good looks; while that odious lord would very fain have bestowed on me equal attention to what Seymour had bestowed on his wife, and of a less equivocal nature.

Lord Charles Belmour at this period

paid us an unexpected visit, having entirely recovered from his late indisposition. I certainly was not glad to see him, though I believed he regarded me with more kindness than formerly, and he was evidently solicitous, by the most respectful attentions, to conciliate the regard of my beloved mother.

Out of compliment to Lord Charles, Seymour dined at home two days; but on the third, he insisted on taking his friend to call at Oswald Lodge, whose hospitable master had called on him, as soon as he heard of his arrival, and was anxious to have the honour of his acquaintance. Lord Charles thought the honour would all be on Mr. Oswald's side, and probably the pleasure also; but he was at length prevailed on to return the call, and to my great joy he returned wondering at Seymour's infatuation in living so much with such a vulgar set;

declaring, that even the Lady Martindale had more the air of a French *petite maîtresse* than of any thing akin to quality. He said this in my mother's presence and mine, and he could not have made, I own, better court to either.

"My daughter and I always thought so; and I am glad to have our judgement confirmed by your lordship," answered my mother. "But my son thinks differently."

"I do indeed," said Pendarves blushing; "and when Lord Charles sees her to advantage,—which he did not to-day,—he will not, I am sure, wonder at my admiration."

"Well, we shall see," said he; "but I trust I shall not change my mind, if the future exhibitions of her exquisite ladyship be like that of to-day. You were not there, ladies; therefore, for your amusement, allow me to open my show-

box and give you portraits of the inhabitants of Oswald Lodge."

He then stood up, and Mr. and Mrs. Oswald lived before us: air, voice, attitude—all perfectly given. Then came Lord Martindale; and at these pictures Pendarves laughed heartily: but when Lord Charles exhibited the dog and the lady by turns dancing, and sometimes barking for the one, and throwing himself into attitudes and smiling for the other, my husband looked much disconcerted, and said it was a gross caricature. But we did not think it so; and though neither my mother nor myself approved such exhibitions, and on principle discouraged them, still on this occasion I must own they were very gratifying to me. But the feeling was an unworthy one, and it was soon punished; for Seymour said with a look of reproach, "You have mortified me, Helen: I had given you credit for

more generosity: I did not think you would thus enjoy a laugh at *any* one's expense; especially that of one whose graces and talents you have yourself acknowledged."

I felt humbled and ashamed at the just reproof, though I thought he should not thus have reproved me, and I was silent; but my mother haughtily replied, "I am glad to hear you own you are mortified to find your wife has *some* leaven of human frailty; as I am now for the first time convinced that you appreciate her justly."

"I have many faults," he replied; "but that of not valuing Helen as she deserves was never one of them; and oh! how deeply do I feel and bitterly lament that I am not more worthy of her and you!"

My mother instantly held out her hand to him; while Lord Charles exclaimed,

"What a graceful and candid avowal! No wonder the offender is so soon forgiven! But believe me, dear madam, there is no hope of amendment from persons who are so ready to own their faults; for they consider that candour makes amends for all their errors, and throws such a charm over them, that they have no motive to improve, especially if they are young and handsome like my friend here; for really he looked so pretty, and modest, and pathetic, that I wondered you only gave him your hand to kiss."

"Be quiet, Lord Charles; you are not a kind commentator."

"But I am a just one. Oh! believe me, there is more hope of an ugly dog like me, who can't look affecting, than of such a man as Seymour. I *cannot* make error look engaging if I would, and therefore must reform in good earnest when I wish to please."

That night Seymour, who sat up with Lord Charles, did not come to bed till some hours after me. I was awake when he entered the room, and could not help asking him what had kept them up so late, anticipating his answer only too well.

"We sat up playing piquet," said he in a cheerful voice; "and I am a great winner, Helen. If Lord Charles stays some days, and plays as he did to-night, I am a made man: only think of my winning a hundred pounds since you left us!"

"But if Lord Charles should *not* always play as he did to-night, and you should *lose* a hundred pounds, what is to become of you then?"

"Psha, Helen! you are always so wise and cautious: there, there, go to sleep, and do not alarm yourself concerning what may never happen."

But I *could* not go to sleep, though I said no more; and I saw that our guest would probably upset those resolutions to which Pendarves had for some time adhered. True, he had not been tempted to break them; but had his desire for play been strong, he could have sought means to indulge it. He had not done so, and therefore I thought him cured; though, as most persons have recourse to gaming merely to produce excitement, and the stimulus of alternate hope and fear, I could not but see that Oswald Lodge and Lady Martindale amply supplied to my husband the place of play; and so that he was interested and amused, it mattered not whence that feeling was derived. And this was he who had declared himself the votary of domestic habits, home amusements, and literary pursuits! But now he was most unexpectedly and unnecessarily assailed; for he had

not gone to temptation, but it was come to *him*,—and my resolution was taken.

The next morning, while we were at breakfast, a chaise stopped at our door. It was sent from Oswald Lodge, to convey my husband thither immediately; as a note from Lady Martindale informed him, that she could not make arrangements for the next evening's exhibition without his advice and assistance: for nobody, she added, had any taste but himself.

This note Lord Charles playfully snatched from him, and would read aloud, much to Seymour's annoyance; as, though the language was elegant, there was not a word spelt right, and every rule of grammar was violated.

"The education of this well-born lady was much neglected, I see," said Lord Charles: "would she could spell as *well* as she can *flatter!*"

He then read the concluding compliment aloud.

"*C'est un peu fort,*" he observed, returning the note; which Seymour angrily observed he ought not to have allowed him to read.

"Well; but you obey the summons, I suppose?"

"Certainly."

"And when may we hope to see you again?"

"As soon as I can get away."

"That may not be till bed-time."

"Impossible! Have I not promised to give you your revenge this evening?"

"Yes; but when a lady's in the case—"

"Nonsense! I shall return to dinner."

"And not before? How mortifying it is to me to see that you are not afraid of leaving me so many hours at liberty to pay court to your wife,—with whom, you know, I am desperately in love!"

"If my wife were not what she is, I should be so; and my confidence, I assure you, is not in *you*, but in *her*."

"Besides, we shall not be alone, my lord, for I am going to challenge you," said I, "to call on my mother."

"Agreed! And now I am flattered. Your lady, you see, thinks me a more formidable person than you do. Suppose, my dear lady, that we go off together, only to punish him for his weak confidence?"

"We will consider of it," said I, laughing; "and in the mean while we will visit my mother."

My husband then drove off, and I prepared for my walk.—When I returned, I found Lord Charles walking up and down the room, and with a thoughtful disturbed countenance.

"Mrs. Pendarves," cried he, "I have no patience with that infatuated husband of yours! Here am I come on purpose

to see him, and for a short time only, and yet, at the call of this equivocal French peeress, he leaves me, and has the indecorum, too, to go away and leave me with his beautiful wife! Tell me, do you not believe in love-powders and philters? for surely some must have been administered to him."

"Not necessarily: my ill-health, the consequence of sorrow, and that sorrow itself, made poor Seymour's home uncomfortable to him; he did not like to see me suffer, therefore he acquired a habit of seeking amusement elsewhere; and the flatteries and invitations of these gay and agreeable people have at last obtained a complete ascendancy over him."

"That I see; and such people too! And to think of what the foolish man leaves! Mrs. Pendarves, I think that if I had had such a wife as his, I could not have left my home as he does."

"Lord Charles," replied I, "this is language which I will not listen to; but I laugh at your self-deception. The habits of all men of the world are similar, and alike powerful, and *your* wife would be left as *I* am: but I assure you that I am convinced my husband loves me tenderly notwithstanding; and I am trying, by conforming to his habits, to make myself as agreeable to him as others are."

Lord Charles seemed about to break into violent exclamations of some kind or other; but I stopped him, and begged to lead the way to my mother's. He bowed respectfully, and followed me: then taking his arm, I tried to begin the conversation I meditated; and luckily he made my task easy by saying, "I conclude Pendarves told you how completely he beat me at cards last night? But he has promised to give me my revenge to-night. The truth is, I have not played

picquet these two years; but before I leave you, I expect to recover my knowledge, and to turn my visit to account: for I have been very unsuccessful at Brookes's lately."

I now stopped, and said, "Hear me, Lord Charles! I believe that you can be a kind and honourable man, and that you are really disposed to be a friend to me."

"To be sure—to be sure I am."

"I feel, I own, your power to be my foe in many essential points, but I am equally sure that you can be my friend if you choose; and I request you, if you value my peace of mind, not to tempt my husband to renew that habit and fondness for play, which he *had lost*, which he cannot afford to indulge, and which, I *assure* you, has impoverished and distressed us."

"You amaze me! Impoverished!"

"Yes; we have been forced to part with our horses and dismiss servants.

Surely, therefore, it would not be the part of a friend to lure Pendarves to the risk of losing a hundred pounds a-night. My lord, I throw myself on your generosity, and say no more."

"You have said enough; and the admirable wife's prudence shall make amends for the rashness of her husband. Besides, I am so flattered by your confidence in me! At last to find you considering me as a friend, confiding in me as a friend, and asking *assistance* from me as a friend! I protest I am more flattered by your friendship than I should be by the love of twenty other women.—Take my revenge! No, indeed. He shall *keep* his hundred pounds: 'I will none of it.'"

"Hold; not so: play with him this evening; but whether you win or *lose*, declare you will play no more. I would rather you should win back the money, and *even more*; for it may be dangerous to Seymour to feel himself enriched by

play, and he may *go on*, though not with you: but after this evening, forbear."

"Excellent! excellent! O that ever I should come hither! I shall be a lost man: for I shall fancy it so charming a thing to have a wife to take care of me, that I shall marry, and find too late there is only one Helen Pendarves!—But tell me, do you wish me to go away to-day, to-morrow, or *when*—in order to put you out of your pain?"

"By no means: I rely implicitly on your promise; and I owe it to you to assure you, Lord Charles, that your company is most welcome to me, and that I shall not forget your kindness."

I now offered him my hand, which he was going to kiss; but suddenly dropping it, he said, "No—no; take it away.—You must not be too good to me: I am not a man to be trusted with much flattery and kindness; for, ugly as I am, the

women have so spoiled me, that I may fancy even you are kind to me '*pour l'amour de mes beaux yeux**,' opening his gooseberry eyes as wide as he could, and in a manner so irresistibly comic, that I gave way to that laughter which he delighted to excite. I therefore entered my mother's parlour looking more animated than usual, and she looked most graciously on my companion as the cause: but she seemed displeased when she found Pendarves was gone to Oswald Lodge, and had left me to entertain his noble guest.

I now took my departure, having some poor cottagers to visit. When I came back, I saw by the thoughtful brow and flushed cheek of both, that their conversation had been of a very interesting nature; and I also saw that there was an air

* For the love of my fine eyes.

of confiding intimacy between them, which I never expected to see between two persons so little accordant in habits and sentiments.

But every human being has a capacity for good as well as evil, and the great difference in us all results chiefly, I believe, from the favourable or unfavourable circumstances in which we are placed. Lord Charles had been so circumstanced, that his capacity for evil alone had been cultivated; and till he knew my mother and myself, he had never met in women any other description of companions than those whom he courted, conquered, and despised,—and those whose rigid morals and disagreeable manners threw him haughtily at a distance, and made him hate virtue for their sakes. But now, trusted, noticed, liked by women of a different kind, his good feelings were awakened; and while *with us*, he really

was the amiable being which he might, differently situated, have always been.

"I love to be with you," said he to us: "your influence is so beneficial over me, and you wrap me in such a pleasing illusion! for while I am with you I fancy myself as good as you are: but when I go away, I shall be just as bad again.—Well; have you nothing to say in reply? How disappointed I am! for I thought you would in mercy have exclaimed, 'Then stay here for ever!' Would I could!"

And indeed, when he did go, I missed him.—But to return to the place whence I digressed. Pendarves came home time enough to take a ride with Lord Charles, but he took care to let him see that he expected more attention from him. That evening he challenged my husband to picquet; and having won back nearly the whole of what he had lost, positively de-

clined playing any more: and, much to Seymour's vexation, he would not play again while he staid. The second night's performances at Oswald Lodge now took place; but though Lord Charles staid to be present at them, he could not help expressing his astonishment to me, when alone, that a modest, respectable gentlewoman like myself should ever have joined in them, and that my husband should have permitted it.

"It is very well for these fiddling, frolicking, fun-hunting Oswalds," said he, "to fill their house with persons and things of this sort, and rant and roar, and kick and jump, and make fools and tumblers of themselves and such of their guests as like it: but never did I expect to see the dignified and retiring Helen Pendarves exhibiting her person on a stage, and levelling herself to a Lady Martindale. As your friend, your ador-

ing friend, I tell you, that such an exhibition degrades you."

"It would do so were it my *choice*, but it is my *necessity*; and the fulfilment of a painful duty *exalts* rather than degrades."

"Duty!"

"Yes; my husband required me to act, and I obeyed."

"I understand you. Oh! what a rash, ill-judging being he is! But I beg your pardon, and will say no more. Yet I must add, *you* are *justified*; but alas! what can justify *him?*"

This conversation did not give me any additional courage to undertake and execute my task; especially as I had now reputation as an actress to lose, and other circumstances increased my timidity.—Lady Martindale had purposely reserved all her powers for this evening, and, as she herself said, she was very glad to

have her performance witnessed by such a judge as Lord Charles Belmour—a man whose opinion, she knew, was looked up to in all circles as decisive, with regard to beauty, grace, and talents. No wonder, therefore, that to throw her spells round him was become the object of her ambition. Hitherto he had avoided her, and she seemed conscious that he did not admire her. Her only hope was, I believe, therefore, to charm him at once by a *coup de théâtre;* and while she convinced Pendarves that for *him* alone she should exert her various powers, her fascinating graces were in reality aimed at Lord Charles: so I thought and suspected,—and though jealousy *blinds*, it also very often *enlightens*.

She was to begin the entertainments by acting a French proverb with a French gentleman, an *emigré*, who was staying at the house; and having no doubt of

her transcendent powers, I felt very reluctant to enter into competition with her. Yet, was not the prize for which I strove my husband's admiration? But then was I not degrading myself from the dignity of a wife and a private gentlewoman, by putting myself into a competition like this? The question was difficult to answer, and while I was thus ruminating, the curtain drew up.

I shall not describe her performance: suffice, that the exhibition was perfect. The dialogue was epigrammatic, and the scenes too short to let the attention flag. Every word, every gesture, every look told; and the curtain dropped amidst the loudest applauses.

I could only see from the side-scene; but I saw enough to make me feel my own inferiority, and I went on for Letitia Hardy in a tremor of spirits of which I was quite ashamed; nor could the *kindest*

of the audience applaud me, except from pity and the wish to encourage me; while I saw that Lord Charles could not even do that, and sat silent, and, I thought, uneasy. However, I recovered myself in the masquerade scene, though my voice when I sung still trembled with emotion; and now I was overwhelmed with plaudits, and even Lord Charles seemed pleased; for, as I was masked, I could examine the audience.

Still the play went off languidly after the lively petite piece, and I saw I had mortified my husband's vanity, which my first performance had gratified.

Much impatience was expressed for the next entertainment, which was Rousseau's Pygmalion. Pygmalion by the French Marquis; the Statue, by Lady Martindale. This was received with delight; and I saw that the beautiful statue, whose exquisite proportions were any

thing but concealed by the dress she wore, absorbed completely the attention of Pendarves; and when she left the stage apparently exhausted, how different were the look and manner with which he led her to her dressing-room, to those with which he had so handed me!

"Why, why," said I to myself, "did I *attempt* a comparison, in which I was sure to fail?" But if I had erred, I had meant well, and my mother had approved my conduct, and that must console me under my want of success; for, instead of winning Seymour back, I now saw that, feeling my rival's superiority over me, he would be more her slave than ever.

The whole concluded with a ballet of action, a monodrame, by Lady Martindale, to which I was too uncomfortable to attend; but what I saw I thought admirable. She pretended to be overcome with fatigue when it was ended, and fell

into my husband's arms, who in his alarm called me to her assistance. I went; but her lip retained its glowing hue, and I saw in her illness nothing but a *new attitude*, and that the statue was now *recumbent*. Having been long enough contemplated in this posture, she opened her eyes, fixed them with a dying look on Pendarves, and then desired him to lead her to her apartment; whence she returned attired in a splendid mantle, which seemed in modesty thrown over her statue dress, but which coquettishly displayed occasionally the form it seemed intended to hide.

I never saw Lord Charles so disconcerted as he was during the whole of the time. He could not bear to praise the heroine of the evening, yet he felt that praise was her due. Nor could he bear either to find fault with or to praise *me*.

In this dilemma, he seemed to think it was best to be silent; and drawing himself up, he entrenched himself in the consciousness that he was *Lord Charles Belmour*. But while Lady Martindale leaned on Seymour on one side and I on the other, as we were awaiting the summons to supper, surrounded by our flatterers, one glance at my dejected countenance brought back his kinder feelings; and turning to my mother, who held his arm, he said, "Shall I tell your fair daughter how enchanted I was with the masquerade scene?"

"I assure you," said Seymour, "Helen did not do herself justice to-night: she did not act as well as she *can act*."

"I should have been very sorry, so much do I esteem her, to have seen her act *better*," was his cold reply. "Would you have your wife, Pendarves, per-

form as well as a professional person, and as if she had been brought up on the stage?"

"I would wish my wife to do *well* whatever she undertakes," replied Seymour.

"And so she does, and so she *did*; but if you do not love her the better (as I *am sure you do*) for the graceful *timidity* which she displayed, I could not esteem you."

Lady Martindale, who watched his every look, now bit her lip, and Seymour did not look pleased. My mother owned afterwards, that what with pinching Lord Charles's arm, to see how Lord and Lady Martindale both were confused by the *first* part of his speech, and squeezing it affectionately from delight at the last, she is very sure Lord Charles carried her marks with him to London. *I* too could scarcely keep the grateful tears

from flowing down my cheeks, which his well-timed kindness brought into my eyes: but I saw that my expression was not lost upon him.

Seymour led Lady Martindale to the head of the supper table, and Lord Charles on account of his rank was forced to sit next her.

"Painful pre-eminence!" he whispered to my mother, who, as I was one of the queens of the night, insisted on my taking her place on the other side. Lord Martindale seated himself next me; and Seymour took the seat vacant by Lady Martindale. As Lord Charles scarcely noticed her, except as far as civility commanded, Lady Martindale soon turned her back on him, and Seymour and she seemed to forget any one else was present."

Lord Charles endeavoured by the most unremitting attentions to conceal from

me what must, he knew, distress me. But he could not do it: I heard every whisper of their softened voices, and I dare say my uneasy countenance was a complete and whimsical contrast to that of Lord Martindale, who seemed perfectly easy under circumstances which would have distressed most men, and talked and laughed with every one in his turn.

The Lord and Lady of the feast, who were never tired of exhibitions, now began their usual demands on the talents of their guests, and were importunate in soliciting several of them to sing, a custom which I usually think "*more honoured in the breach than the observance;*" but on this occasion it was welcome to me, especially as I knew that it must for a time interrupt Seymour's attention to Lady Martindale. But as the hypochondriac, when he reads a book on diseases, always finds his own symptoms in

every case before him, so I in the then existing state of my feelings always brought home every thing I heard or read to my own heart; and two of the songs which were sung that night accorded so well with my own state of mind, that I felt the tears come into my eyes as I listened; and during the following one Pendarves sighed so audibly, that I imagined *he* felt great sympathy with the sentiments; and that idea increased my suffering:—

SONG.

O that I could recall the day
When all my hours to thee were given,
And, as I gazed my soul away,
Thou wert my treasure, world, and heaven!

Then time on noiseless pinions flew,
And life like one bright morning beam'd:
Then love around us roses threw,
Which ever fresh and fragrant seem'd.
And are these moments gone for ever?
And can they ne'er return? No NEVER.

For oh! that cruel traitor Time,
Although he might unheeded move,
Bore off our YOUTH's luxuriant prime,
And *also* stole the *bloom of* LOVE.

Yet still the thought of raptures past
Shall gild life's dull remaining store,
As sinking suns a *splendour* cast
On scenes their *presence lights* no more.
But are those raptures gone for ever?
And will they ne'er return? No NEVER.

The other song was only in unison with my feelings in the last lines of the last verse. Still, while my morbid fancy made me consider them as the expression of my own sentiments, I listened with such a tell-tale countenance, that my delicacy was wounded; for I saw that my emotion was visible to those who sat opposite to me.

The song was as follows:—

FAIREST, SWEETEST, DEAREST,

A SONG.

" Say, by what name can I impart
My sense, dear girl, of what thou art?
Nay, though to frown thou darest,
I'll say thou art of *girls the pride:*
And though that modest lip may chide,
Mary! I'll call thee ' FAIREST.'

' Yet no—that word can but express
The soft and winning loveliness
In which the sight thou meetest.
But not thy heart, thy temper too,
So good, so sweet—Ha! that will do!
Mary! I'll call thee ' SWEETEST.'

" But ' fairest, sweetest,' vain would be
To speak the love I feel for thee:
Why smilest thou as thou hearest?"
" Because," she cried, " one little name
Is all I wish from thee to claim—
That *precious* name is ' DEAREST.' "

You will not, I conclude, imagine that I remember these songs only from hav-

ing heard them that night, especially as they have very little merit; but the truth is, I was so pleased with them, because I fancied them applicable to my own feelings, that I requested them of the gentlemen who sung, and they were given to me.

Lord Charles meanwhile listened to the singing with great impatience, as he had had enough of the entertainment, and still more of the company, which was very numerous, and by no means as select as it had been before. Indeed at one table were many persons in whom the observant eye of Lord Charles discovered associates whose evident vulgarity made him feel himself out of his place. However, he could not presume to break up the party; and as our indefatigable host and hostess still kept forcing the talents of their guests into their service, song succeeded to song, and duet

to duet. From one of the latter, however, sung by a lady and gentleman, I at length derived a soothing feeling; and in *one moment*, an observation of Seymour's, with, as I fancied, a correspondent and *intended* expression of countenance, removed a load from my heart, and my clouded brow became consciously to myself unclouded again.

The words of this healing duet were as follows:—

DUET.

"Say, why art thou pensive, beloved of my heart?
Indeed I am happy wherever thou art:
My eyes I confess toward others may rove,
But never, believe me, with wishes of love.
And trust me, however my *glances* may roam,
Of them, and *my heart*, THOU ALONE ART THE HOME!"

ANSWER.

"Perhaps I am wrong thus dejected to be;
But my faithful eyes never wander from *thee*.

On beauty and youth *I unconsciously* gaze,
No thought, no emotion in me they can raise;
And ah! if thine eyes get the habit to roam,
How can I *be certain* they'll EVER COME HOME?"

"Oh! trust thy own charms! See the bee as he flies,
And visits each blossom of exquisite dies;
There culls of their sweetness some store for his cell;
But short are his visits, and prompt his farewell;
For still he remembers, howe'er he may roam,
That *hoard of delight* which AWAITS HIM AT HOME.

"Then trust me, however thy Henry may roam,
I feel my best pleasures AWAIT ME AT HOME."

"I'll try to believe, howsoever thou roam,
Thy heart's dearest pleasures await thee at home*."

"That is a charming duet," cried Seymour when it was ended. Then leaning behind Lady Martindale and Lord Charles, and calling to me, he said, with a look from which my conscious eye

* This duet is set, and about to be published, by Westley Doyle, Esq.

shrunk, "Helen, I admire the sentiment of that duet. I think, my love, we will get it—we should sing it *con amore*, should we not?" I could not look at him as I replied, "*I* could, I am *sure*."

"Silly girl," he added in a low and kind tone, "and so, I am *sure*, could I."

I then ventured to raise my eyes to his; and his expression was such, that I felt quite a different creature, and was able to enjoy the rest of the evening.

But why do I enter into these minute and unimportant details? Let me efface them—but no, perhaps they may chance to meet the eyes of some whose hearts have felt the anxieties and the vicissitudes of mine, and to them they may be interesting.

Lord Martindale was now requested to favour the company with a song, and with great good nature he instantly complied;—while Lord Charles whispered

across me to my mother, "What a disgrace that fellow is to the peerage!"

"By his vices I *grant* you," replied my mother, "but not by his obliging compliance."

Lord Charles shrugged up his shoulders and was about to reply, when Silence was vociferated rather angrily by the lady of the house, who had not been blind to the airs which, as she said, Lord Charles had given himself the whole evening. Lord Martindale, as may be supposed, was greatly applauded, on the same principle as that mentioned by the poet with regard to noble authors;

"For if a lord once own the happy lines,
How the wit brightens! how the taste refines!"

and the noisy expressions of admiration which rewarded a very mediocre performance did not increase the good humour of our noble guest, against whom I saw an attack preparing at the bottom of the

table. At length a very pretty girl, and who had sung with considerable skill, tried to engage the attention of Lord Charles; and finding "Sir" was not sufficient, she added "Mr. Belmour, Sir!" But some one whispered, "He is a Lord;" on which she said, "Dear me! Well then, My lord, Lord Belmour;" and Lord Charles turned toward the pretty speaker, while a half-muttered "Vulgar animal!" was audible to my mother and myself, and formed a ludicrous contrast to the affectedly respectful attention and bent head with which he listened to what she had to observe. But when he found that the young lady was requesting him to *sing*, and that she declared she had a claim on him, his expression of mingled *hauteur*, astonishment, and indignation, was highly comic, and we who knew him were eagerly expecting his answer, when we heard him

say, having bowed and smirked his hand affectedly to his heart at the same time, "With the greatest pleasure in life;—which wine, claret or Champagne?"

"Dear me," cried the young lady, "I did not ask you to drink, but to sing, my lord."

"Oh! Champagne; very good. Carry a glass to that young lady;" but she indignantly rejected it, and repeated her request.

"I beg pardon," replied the impracticable Lord Charles, "I thought you said Champagne: then take claret to the young lady," who in vain exerted her voice. He remained quite deaf, holding his ear like a deaf person, much to the amusement of the company and the confusion of the fair supplicant, who had been encouraged by the admiring glances which Lord Charles had till now bestowed on

her, to think that any request from her would have been attended to.

Thus far Lord Charles's endangered dignity had come off with flying colours, as it was no great affront to be requested to sing by a pretty girl, even though she had told him that he had a *singing face*, and *looked like a singer*; for the turn which he had given to her application got the laugh on his side, and he was very sure that she would not so presume again. But he was not to be let off so easily; for Mr. Oswald, who, being almost "as drunk as a lord," felt himself quite as great as one, now came behind Lord Charles, and giving him a sounding blow across the back, exclaimed with an oath, "Come, now, *Belmour*, there is a good fellow, do sing, for I have heard you are a comical dog when you like."

If a look could have annihilated, that

instant would the little fat man have disappeared from off the face of the earth. The glance of Lord Charles was powerless even to *wound* Mr. Oswald; and he was equally unmoved when, scorning even to answer his importunate host, our friend suddenly addressed my mother, saying, "I think, Mrs. Pendarves, you desired me to call your carriage?"

"You are mistaken, my lord," replied my mother, with a reproving look which he well understood; and his tormentor was going to assail him again, when Seymour, to relieve Lord Charles, drew him into conversation; and I had just advised his still irritated guest to remember that Oswald was intoxicated, when our attention was attracted to a conversation between Mrs. Oswald and another lady, of which Lord Charles was the subject; and it was evident that Mrs. Oswald spoke of him in no friendly tone.

"Yes, my lord," said she, "you may look; we were certainly talking of your lordship."

"You do me much honour, madam."

"That is as it may be, my lord; but I was trying to do you justice, for my friend said it was *pride* that prevented your singing; but *I* said—(and here she raised her voice to a shriller and more ludicrous pitch than usual) yes, I said, says I, "That is *impossible*, my dear; it cannot be *pride*; for if a real *peer* of the realm," says I, "the *real thing*, condescends to sing and amuse the company, surely Lord Charles Belmour need not be above it, who is only a *commonly called*, you know."

Instantly, to my consternation, and afterwards to his own, Lord Charles, thrown off his guard by this sarcasm, *echoed* her last words, and gave her tone and manner so exactly, that the effect upon the com-

pany was irresistible, and a general laugh ensued; which, to do him justice, shocked more than it gratified the self-condemned mimic, who could only for a moment be provoked to violate the rules of good breeding; and he was completely subdued, when Mrs. Oswald, with a degree of forbearance and good-humour which exalted her in my esteem, observed, "Well, my lord, you have condescended to exert your talent for mimicry, though you would not sing; and though it was at my expense, I am grateful to you, as you have contributed to amuse my company."

"Admirably replied!" exclaimed my mother.

"Excellent, excellent, bravo!" cried Pendarves; while Lord Charles, admonished, penitent and ashamed, was not slow to redeem himself from the sort of disgrace which he had incurred. Rising gracefully and bowing his head on his

clasped hands, he solicited her pardon for the liberty which her evident good-nature had emboldened him to take, declaring at the same time, that if she forgave him, it was long before he should forgive himself.

Mrs. Oswald, who was really as kind-hearted as she seemed, readily granted the pardon which he asked, and he respectfully pressed her offered hand to his lips. He did more; for while the carriages were called, he suddenly disappeared, and in a moment we could have fancied ourselves at the door of Drury-lane or Covent-garden; for the offered services of link-boys, the cries of "Coach, coach," and "Here, your honour," with all the different sounds, were heard in the hall; and while the guests listened delighted to this new and unexpected entertainment, the Oswalds were, I saw, evidently gratified at finding that it pro-

ceeded from the talent of Lord Charles. O the unnecessary humiliation to which pride exposes itself! Had he civilly though firmly refused the young lady's and Mr. Oswald's request to sing, and not discovered in the evening his haughty contempt for the company and his host, or insulted his hostess, he needed not to have condescended to an expiatory exhibition from which under other circumstances his pride would have properly revolted.

Thus ended this to me disagreeable evening, which extended far into the morning. The drive home was pleasant; for Lord Charles, having reconciled himself to himself by his ample *amende honorable*, and by the generous candour with which he received our reproofs, thought he was privileged to indulge his less amiable feelings by turning some of the company into ridicule, and exhibiting them to the very life before us. I must own

that I again felt an ungenerous pleasure in some part of the entertainment, namely his mimicry of Lady Martindale, which I vainly endeavoured to subdue, and I was glad that, as Pendarves, rode on the box, he did not witness my degradation. I must add, that both my mother and myself were gratified to observe that Lord Charles forbore to mimic our kind but vulgar host and hostess; and my mother took care to let him know indirectly that his delicacy was not lost upon her.

Another performance was fixed for that day week; the original Letitia Hardy, however, was expected, and most gladly did I offer to resign my part to her. Still, I was mortified to see with how little concern Pendarves heard me offer my resignation, and saw it accepted. Alas! not even Lord Charles's and my mother's joy at my being removed from a situation which they thought un-

worthy of me, could reconcile me to his indifference on the subject.

The next day Lord Charles was to leave us; but I saw that his departure was more welcome to my husband than to my mother and myself. In the morning he had requested Pendarves to walk with him round the grounds, and they returned, I observed, with disturbed countenances.

Lord Charles then called, and sat some time with my mother. What passed between them I do not know; but their parting was even affectionate, and his with me was distinguished from all our other partings by a degree of emotion for which I could not account.

"How I shall miss you!" said I, softened by his dejection.

"Thank you! I can better bear to leave you now:" and springing into his carriage he drove off, and I felt forlorn;

for I felt that I had lost a friend: and I also felt that I wanted one who, like him, had some check over my husband.

What more shall I say of this painful period of my life, for which, however, painful as it was, I would gladly have exchanged that which soon followed? One day was a transcript of the other. Pendarves, ever good-natured and kind while he was at home, seemed to think that he was thereby justified in leaving me continually; but, as I was not of that opinion, to use a French phrase, *je dépérissois à vue d'œil;* and though I affected to be cheerful, my mother saw that my feelings were undermining my existence. But not even to her would I complain of my husband and she respected my silence too much to wish me to break it. However, *she* was with me,—she, I felt, never would forsake me, or love me less; and while I had her, I was far from being completely

miserable. Alas! what was she not to me? friend, counsellor, comforter!

But the decree was gone forth, and even her I was doomed to resign!

Not long after Lord Charles had quitted us, I perceived a visible alteration in my mother's appearance. I saw that she ate little, that she was very soon fatigued, and that her fine spirits were gone. I had no doubt but that she fretted for my anxieties. I therefore laboured the more to convince her that I was not as uneasy as she thought me.

But how vainly did I try to veil my heart from her penetrating glance! If there be such a thing as the art of divination, it is possessed by the eagle eye of interested affection, and that *was hers*.

My mother saw all my secret struggles; she pitied, she resented their cause; and I have sometimes feared that she *sunk* under them.

One morning, Pendarves on his return from Oswald Lodge came in with a very animated countenance, and told us that a new description of amusement was introduced there, namely, *archery*, and he must beg me to go with him the next day, and learn to be an archer. "Lady Martindale," cried he, "already shoots like Diana herself."

"The only resemblance, I should think," said my mother, "which she has to Diana. But what do you say to this proposal, Helen? *I* must take leave to say that, as *your mother*, you can never go to Oswald Lodge again with my consent on *any* terms: and to engage in this new competition, oh! never, never!"

"And why not, madam? There is nothing indelicate in such an exhibition; and I own my pride in Helen, as a husband, made me wish to see her fine form exhibited in the graceful action of shoot-

ing at a target. Besides, as I really wish if possible to associate her in all my amusements, I was delighted to think this new pursuit would have led her to join me in my visits to the Lodge, and I am really desirous to know on what grounds you object to her obliging me."

"On account of the company there. Mr. and Mrs. Oswald are weak, vain people, fond of courting persons of quality; and so as they can but be intimate with a Lord and Lady, they care not of what description they are. This Lord Martindale is, I find, a man not much noticed by his equals; and as to Lady Martindale, the woman who could so expose her person in the dress of the Statue is not a fit companion for my daughter, nor your wife."

"You are severe, madam; but what says Helen?"

"That my mother does not make suf-

ficient allowances for the difference of manners and ideas between a French and an English woman; and that the dress which shocks us in the former does not necessarily prove incorrectness of conduct."

"Incorrectness of conduct! and can your mother possibly suppose I would introduce my wife to a woman whom I knew to be incorrect in her conduct?"

"No, Seymour, no: I do you more justice. But it is my duty to inform you that it is suspected this person is Lord Martindale's mistress only, not his wife."

"*Not* his wife!" interrupted Seymour.

"No, so I am informed. As to him, you know his character is so infamous that one can wonder at nothing he does; and *he* has been suspected of being a spy for the French convention, as well as the lady."

"Madam," said Seymour, "I thought

you had been above listening to tales like these, and I cannot think myself justified in acting upon them. On the contrary, by taking my wife to the Lodge, I think it right to show my disregard of them, especially as by staying away, and by her distant manner when there, Helen has already injured the character of Lady Martindale, and made even my attentions to her the source of calumny. This the afflicted lady told me with tears and lamentations, and Helen's renewed visits can alone repair the injury her absence has done."

"So, then, *this* is the real reason of your wishing to make Helen a sharer in your amusements, and to exhibit her fine form to advantage!" exclaimed my mother indignantly. "But, Mr. Pendarves, if your constant visits are injurious to the fame of this afflicted lady, you know your remedy—*discontinue* them; for never,

with my consent, shall my virtuous daughter lend her assistance to shield any one from the infamy which they deserve."

"Deserve, madam!" cried Seymour, as indignant as she was: "*repeat* that, and, spite of the love and reverence I bear you, I shall exert a husband's lawful authority, and see who dares dispute it."

"*Not I*," she replied, folding her arms submissively on her breast, "and still less that poor trembling girl. No, Pendarves, my only resource now is supplication and entreaty: and I conjure you, by the dear name of your beloved mother, and by the memory of past fond and endearing circumstances, and *hours*, to grant the prayer of a *dying woman*, and not to force your wife to this abode of revelry and riot. I feel my days are already numbered; and when I am taken from you, *bitter* will be your recollections if you refuse, my son, and soothing if

you grant my prayer. I *know* you, Seymour, and I know that you cannot do any great cruelty without great remorse."

It was some moments before Pendarves could speak; at length he said—"Your request *alone* would have been sufficient, without your calling up such agonizing ideas. Helen, my best love, tell your mother you shall *never* go to Oswald Lodge again." He then put his handkerchief to his eyes, and rushed out of the room.

"The foolish boy's heart is in the right place still," said my mother, giving way to tears, but smiling at the same time.

But I, alas! could neither smile nor speak. She had called herself a dying woman; and through the rest of the day I could do nothing but look at and watch her, and go out of the room to weep; and my night was passed in wretchedness and prayer.

The next day I found my husband cold and sullen in manner; and I suspected that, having engaged to bring me to Oswald Lodge, he was mortified and ashamed to go thither without me, and would, I doubted not, make some excuse for my staying away which was not strictly true.

No one could feel more strongly or more virtuously than Pendarves: but good feelings, unless they are under the guard of strict principles, are subject to run away instantly when summoned by the voice of pleasure and of error: and before he set off for the archery ground, he told me he sincerely repented his promise to my mother.

I did not reply, but shook my head mournfully.

"Psha!" said he, "that ever a fine woman like you, Helen, should wish to appear in her husband's eyes little better

than a constant *memento mori!* Helen, an arrow cannot fly as far in a wet as in a dry air; and a laughing eye hits where a tearful one fails. You see I already steal my metaphors from my new study. But, good bye, sweet Helen! and when I return let me find you a little less dismal."

This was not the way to make me so; nor were his daily visits at this seducing house, which began in the morning, and lasted till he came home to dress for dinner: he then returned thither to stay till evening. At last he chose to dress there, and he did not return till night; nor, perhaps, would he have done that, had there not been some house-breaking in our neighbourhood, and he was afraid of leaving the house so ill defended. I think that pique and resentment had some share in making him thus increase in the length as well as constancy of his

visits; for I saw but too clearly that he continued offended with my poor mother; and I doubted not but that he had owned she was the cause of my refusal to visit at the house, and that Lady Martindale had added force to this bitter feeling.

But he soon lost all resentment against my beloved parent.—Not very long after his painful conversation with her I was summoned to her, as she was too ill to rise, and had sent for medical advice.

"Go for my husband instantly," cried I.

"My mistress forbade me go for him," replied her faithful Juan (one of my father's manumised slaves), "and I canno go."

"Then she does not think very ill of *herself?*" said I.

"No, but I think very bad indeed."

And when I saw her, my fears were as strongly excited.

"I am going, I am going *fast*, my

child," said she: "but I do not wish to have Pendarves sent for yet: I wish to have you a little while without any divided feelings, and *all my own* once more: when *he* comes, the wife will seduce away the child."

"How can you think so?" said I, giving way to an agony of grief; "and how can you be so barbarous as to tell me you are dying?"

"My poor child! I wished long ago to prepare you, but you would not be prepared. For your sake I still wished to live. You would have *better* spared me years ago, Helen! But this is cruel; and I will try to behave better."

As soon as her physician arrived, and had felt her pulse, I saw by his countenance that he was considerably alarmed; and the first feeling of my heart was to send for my husband, for him on whom I had been accustomed to rely in the

hour of affliction. But I *dared* not, after what had passed; and I tried to rally all the powers of my mind to meet the impending evil, while I raised my thoughts to Him who listens to the cry of the orphan.

The physician had promised to come again in the evening. He did so; and then I learnt that there was *indeed* no hope; and I also learnt, by the agony of that moment, that I had in reality hoped till then; and, more like an automaton than aught alive, I sat by the now fast exhausting sufferer.

Pendarves returned at night, and heard with anguish uncontroulable, not only that my mother was dying, but had forbidden that he should be sent for; and he arrived at the house in a state little short of distraction, nor could he be kept from the chamber of death.

His countenance, as he stood at the

foot of the bed, told all the agony of his mind. They tell me so, for I saw him not; I could only see that object whom I was soon to behold no more!

My mother knew him; read, no doubt, all his wild wan look expressed; and smiling kindly, held out her hand to him. He was instantly on his knees by her bedside; and she seemed, from the look she gave him, to feel all the maternal love for him revive which she had experienced through life.

Your husband, my dear friend, now came to perform his interesting duty, and we left her alone with him.

Oh! what a night succeeded! But Pendarves felt more than I. My faculties were benumbed: I had made such unnatural efforts for some time past to appear cheerful, while my heart was breaking, that I was too much exhausted to be able to endure this new demand on

my fortitude and my strength; therefore already was that merciful stupor coming over me, which saved, I firmly believe, both my life and my reason.

My mother frequently, during that night, joined my hand in that of Pendarves, grasped them thus united, while her eyes were raised to heaven in prayer, but spoke not. At length, however, just as the last moment was approaching, she faltered out—"Seymour, be kind, be very kind to my poor child; she has only you now."

He replied by clasping me to his breast; and in one moment more all was over!

You know what followed; you know that for many weeks I was blessedly unconscious of every thing, and that I lay between death and life under the dominion of fever. My first return of consciousness and of speech showed itself thus:—I heard voices below, and recog-

nised them, no doubt, as female voices; for I drew back the curtain, and asked my mother's faithful Alice whose voice I heard. But the joy my speaking gave the poor creature was instantly damped, for I added—"But I conclude it is my mother's voice, and I dare say she will be here presently."

Alice, bursting into tears, replied—"Your blessed mother never come now."

"Oh, but by and by will do:" and I closed my eyes again.

Alice now ran down to call my husband, and tell him what had passed. The voices I heard were those of Mrs. Oswald and Lady Martindale, who had called every day to inquire for me; and Pendarves had been this day prevailed upon to go down to them. But he bitterly repented his complaisance when he found I had heard them talking; though he rejoiced in my restored hearing, which

had seemed quite gone. He hastily, therefore, dismissed his visiters, and resumed his station by my bed-side. I knew him, and spoke to him; but damped all his satisfaction by asking for my mother, and wondering where she was. He could not answer me, and was doubtful what he ought to reply when he recovered himself.

At this moment the physician entered; and hearing what had passed, declared that the sooner he could make me understand what had happened, and shed tears (for I had shed none yet), the sooner I should recover; and he advised his beginning to do it directly.

Accordingly, when I again asked for her he said—"Do you not see my black coat, Helen? and do you not remember our loss?"

"Oh, yes; but I thought our mourning for the dear child was over."

"You see!" said Pendarves mournfully.

The physician replied—"Till her memory is restored, though her life is spared, a cure is far distant; but persevere."

In a fortnight I was able to take air; but I still wondered where my mother was, though I soon forgot her again.

But one day Pendarves asked me if I would go and visit the grave of my child, which I had not visited for some time. I thankfully complied, and he dragged me in a garden chair to the church door.

It was not without considerable emotion that he supported me to that marble slab which now covered my mother as well as my child, and I caught some of his trembling agitation.

"Look there, my poor Helen!" said he.

I did look, and read the name of my child.

"Look lower yet."

I did so, and the words 'Julia Pendarves,' with the sad *et cetera*, met my view, and seemed to restore my shattered comprehension.

In a moment the whole agonizing truth rushed upon my mind; and throwing myself on the cold stone, I called upon my departed parent, and wept till I was deluged in tears, and had sobbed myself into the stillness of exhaustion.

"Thank God! thou art restored, my beloved, and all will yet, I trust, be well," said my husband as he bore me away.

From that time my memory returned, and with it so acute a feeling of what I had lost, that I fear I was ungrateful enough to regret my imbecility.

I now insisted on hearing details of all that had occurred since my illness; and I found that my uncle and aunt had come down to attend the funeral of my mo-

ther, and that Lord Charles had attended uninvited to pay her that tribute of respect, nor had he returned to London till my life was declared out of danger. How deeply I felt this attention! I also heard that the ladies at the Lodge pestered my husband with letters, to prevail on him to spare his sensibility the pain of following my lost parent to the grave: but that, however he shrunk from the task, he had treated their request with the utmost disregard, saying, that if he had no other motive, the certainty that he was doing what *I* should have wished, was sufficient.

When I was quite restored to strength, both of mind and body, Pendarves gave me the key of my mother's papers, which he had carefully sealed up. My mother left no will, as she wished me to inherit every thing; but in a little paper directed to Pendarves she desired that an income

might be settled on Juan and Alice, which would make them comfortable and independent for life; that her friends the De Waldens might have some memorial of her given to them; and that Lord Charles might have her travelling writing-desk.

Oh! what overwhelming feelings I endured while looking over her papers, containing a sketch of her life, her reflections and prayers when I married Pendarves, a character of Lady Helen, of her husband and of my father, and many fragments, all indicative of a mother's love and a mother's anxiety! But tender sorrow was suspended by curiosity, when I found one letter from Ferdinand de Walden! It was evidently written in answer to one from her, in which she had described me as suffering deeply, but, on principle, trying to appear cheerful, and for her sake dutifully trying to conceal from her the agony of my heart. What *else* she had said, was very

evident from the part of the letter which I transcribe, translating it from the French.

"Yes! you only, I believe, do me justice. I should have been a more devoted husband than Pendarves; having my affections built, I trust, on a firmer foundation than his, *viz.* a purifying faith, and its result, pure habits. Still, I know not how to excuse his conduct towards such an angel! for oh! that faded cheek, and that shrunk form, that dejection of spirits from a mother's sorrows which seem to have alienated *him*, would have endeared her *to me* still more fondly—"

I had resolution enough, my dear friend, to pause here, and *read no more:* nay, distrusting my own strength, I had the courage to commit the dangerous letter to the flames, and that was *indeed* an exertion of duty.

I shall pass lightly and rapidly over the next few months.—My husband gradu-

ally resumed his intercourse at the Lodge; while I, to conceal as much as possible his neglect, paid and received visits; and Mrs. Ridley and my aunt were by turns my guests, for I had now lost my dread of the latter. She had nothing to tell but what I knew already, except that she believed my husband more criminal than I did or could think him, and that I positively forbade her ever to *name* him to me again. I also visited you, and did all I could to fly from that feeling of *conscious desolation* which was ever present to me since I lost my mother. In all other afflictions I had her to rely upon; I had her to sooth and to comfort me: but who had I to console me for the loss of her? on whose never-to-be-abated tenderness could I rely? Other ties, if destroyed, may be formed again; but we can have parents only *once;* and I had lost my mother, my sole surviving pa-

rent, at a moment when I wanted her most. Still, I roused myself from my lethargy of grief, and 'sorrowed' *not* like 'one without hope.' But the misery of disappointed and wounded affections preyed on me while tenderer woes slumbered, and my health continued to fade, my youth to decay.

My kind aunt and Mrs. Ridley were both just come on a visit to me, when Pendarves signified his intention of accompanying his friends on a tour to the Lakes. He said his health had suffered much from his anxiety during my illness, and he thought the journey would do him good.

"Then take your wife a journey," cried my aunt bluntly: "she wants it more than you do."

"She will not accompany my friends," replied he; "and my *word* is pledged to go with them."

"Is a pledge given to friends more sacred than duty to a wife, Mr. Seymour Pendarves?"

"Is it a husband's duty never to stir without his wife, madam?"

"My dear aunt, you forget," said I, "how unfit I am to travel: quiet and home suit me best."

"It is well they do," said my aunt; and Seymour left the room.

I will pass over the time that intervened before Seymour's departure: suffice that I tried to attribute his still frequent absences from home to his dislike of his aunt's society; and in the meanwhile I masked an aching heart in smiles, that no one might have the authority of my dejected spirits to found an accusation of my husband upon.

At length the day of Seymour's departure arrived, and we had an affectionate and on my side a tearful parting: but I

recovered myself soon; and though I deeply felt the unkindness of his leaving me after my recent affliction, I declared it the wisest thing he could do, and that I hoped he would find me fat and cheerful at his return. But I saw I did not convert my *auditors;* and that Lord Charles Belmour, who called to inquire after my health, absolutely *started* when he found that Seymour was gone away on a journey. I could not bear this, but left the room; for I could not, would not, either by word or look, blame my husband; and I could not bear to observe that he was blamed by others.

At the end of three weeks my uncle came down to fetch his wife; and I heard, with a satisfaction which I could not conceal, that my uncle hoped he should be able to prove that Lady Martindale, as she was called, was a spy of the Convention, and that he could get her sent out

of the country on the Alien Bill; for that she was undoubtedly the mistress, not the wife, of Lord Martindale. I also learnt that Lord Charles had been indefatigable in using his exertions and his interest to effect this purpose, in hopes, as my aunt said, of opening my husband's eyes; and she thought, when he saw that his uncle and his friend were thus active and watchful to save him from perdition, that he could not refuse to be convinced and saved.

Alas! we none of us as yet knew Pendarves. We did not know that in proportion to conscious strength of mind is the capacity of conviction—and that no one is so jealous of interference, and so averse to being proved in the wrong, as those who are most prone to err and most conscious of weakness. My uncle and aunt went away in high spirits at the idea of the good which was going to ac-

crue to me from their exertions, and left me much cheered in my prospects, little thinking of the blow which these exertions were ensuring to me.

My husband wrote to me on his journey about twice a week; but as he rarely did so till the post was just going out, or the horses were waiting, I was convinced, either that he had lost all remains of tenderness for me, or that, conscious of acting ill, he could not bear to write.

When he had been gone two months, I was expecting his arrival in London every day, and with no small anxiety; for my uncle had written me word, that as soon as Annette Beauvais (for that *was* her real name) arrived in town, she would be seized by the officers employed by Government, and be shipped off directly for Altona—whither Lord Martindale, who was reckoned a dangerous dis-

loyal subject, would be advised to accompany her.

But while I was pleasing myself with the idea that Pendarves, when convinced of the real character of those with whom he associated so intimately, would return to me thankful for the discovery, and that in the detected courtesan and spy he would forget the fascinating companion, a very different end was preparing for the well-intentioned plans of our friend and relation.

Pendarves, not choosing to fail in respect to his uncle, and resolved to consider himself as on good terms with him, called at his house in Stratford Place; but unfortunately found only Mrs. Pendarves. The consequence you may easily foresee. She reproached him with his cruel neglect of his wife, and then triumphed in the approaching discomfiture of that wicked woman who had lured

him from her; informing him with great exultation, that his uncle had procured her arrestation; that she would be taken up directly, and sent abroad; and that his angel-wife was expecting his return to her with eager and affectionate love.

"And was my wife privy to this injustice and this outrage?" asked Pendarves, with a faltering voice and a flashing eye.

"To be sure she was."

"Then she may expect me, madam, but I will never return!" Having said this, he rushed from the house, and hurried back to the lodgings. He found Lady Martindale, as she still persisted in calling herself, in fits, and Lord Martindale threatening, but in vain. The warrant was executed, and the lady forced to set off, her lord having a hint given him, which made his retreat advisable also.

"You shall not go *alone*, my friends,"

said Pendarves as soon as he saw that their banishment was certain; "and as my family have presumed to *procure* your exile, they shall find that they have exiled me too."

So saying, he left the house, gained a passport as an American, which you know he was, as well as myself, by birth, and soon overtaking them, he travelled with them, and embarked with them for Altona.

He wrote to me from the port whence they embarked, and such a letter! I thought I should never have held up my head after it. He reproached me for joining the mean cabal against an injured and innocent woman, and declared that as I and his uncle had caused her exile, he felt it his duty to sooth and to *share* it.

In a postscript he told me he had drawn for all the money that was in his

banker's hands, before he set out on his journey; that he wished me to let our house, and remove into my mother's, which was still empty; that he trusted I would not let him want in a foreign land; for in *some* respects he knew I could be generous; but that he feared the income of *his* fortune *must* be appropriated to the payment of his debts, which were so many, he feared he could not return, even if he wished it, except at the danger of losing his personal liberty. He trusted therefore that I would join my uncle in settling his affairs; and if he wanted money to support him, he knew I would spare him some out of the fortune which came to me on the death of my mother, the income of which I, and I alone, could receive.

In the midst of the wretchedness inflicted by this letter—for it was my nature to cling to hope, I eagerly caught at

the high idea of my conjugal virtues which this cruel letter implied; and I trusted that, when intimate association had completely unmasked this Syren and her paramour, he would prize me the more from contrast, and hasten home to receive my eagerly-bestowed forgiveness. But the order to let the house was so indicative of a separation *meant* to be long, if not eternal, that again and again I went from hope to despair. But there was one sorrow converted into rejoicing. Till now I had grieved that my mother was no more: but *now* I rejoiced to think that this last terrible blow was spared her; that she did not live to witness the grief of her worse than widowed daughter, nor to see the degradation of the beloved son of her idolized Lady Helen. Degradation did I say? Yes: but I still persisted to excuse my husband, and would not own even to *myself*

that he was without excuse for his conduct. I thought it was *generous* in him not to forsake his friends in their distress, nor would I allow any one to *hint* at the probability that his female companions was his mistress.

I also resolved to justify his reliance on my exertions and my generosity. I wrote to my uncle, I made myself acquainted with all his embarrassments, I dismissed every servant but Alice and Juan, and I set apart two-thirds of my own income also for payment of the debts.

My uncle would fain have interfered, and advanced me the money; but I had a pride and a pleasure in making sacrifices for my husband's sake, and I wished Mr. Pendarves to leave him money in his will, as a resource for him when he should return to England, and I should be no more; for I fancied that I was far

gone in a rapid decline. But I mistook nervous symptoms, the result of a distressed mind, for consumptive ones; and to my great surprise, when I had arranged my husband's affairs, and had, while so employed, been forced to visit London once or twice, and associate with the friends who loved and honoured me, my pain of the side decreased, my pulse became slower, my appetite returned, and I recovered something of my former appearance. But it was now the end of the winter of 1793, and the reign of terror had long been begun in France, while we heard from every quarter that the English there were in the utmost danger, on account of the unpopularity of the English Government; that all were leaving France who could get away; and Pendarves was gone to Paris! But then he was an American. Still, I could not divest myself of fears for his life; and the

horrible idea of his pining in a foreign land, in a prison and in poverty, (for, though he had written to say he was arrived in Paris, he had not drawn for money, nor given his address,) haunted me continually. To be brief: you know how the idea of my husband's danger took entire possession of my imagination, till I conceived it to be my duty to set off for Paris.

You remember, that you and your husband both dissuaded me from the rash and hazardous undertaking; and that I replied, "I have now but one object of interest in the world, the husband of my love! True, a romantic generosity, and what he calls just resentment, have led him for the present to forsake his country and *me;* but that is no reason why I should forsake *him;* and who knows but that the result of my self-devotion may restore him to me more attached than

ever?" You know that you listened, admired, and almost encouraged me; and that you have always considered this determination, as the crown of my conjugal glory, and held it up as a bright example of a wife's duty. But, my dear friend, my own sobered judgement and the lessons of experience, together with reproof from lips that never can deceive, and a judgement that can rarely err, have convinced me that I rather *violated* than *performed* a wife's duty when I set off on this romantic expedition to France.

No: if ever I deserved the character of a good wife, it was from the passive fortitude and the patient spirit with which I bore up against neglect, wounded affections, and slighted tenderness. It was the sense of duty which led me to throw a veil over my husband's faults, which held him up when his own errors had cast him down, and which led me still, in strict

compliance with my marriage vows, to obey and honour him by all a wife's attentions, even when I feared that he deserved not my esteem.

But to go on with my narrative. My uncle and aunt came down to reason me out of my folly, as they called it; and my uncle thought he held a very persuasive argument, for he told me he felt it *indelicate* for me to intrude myself and my fondness on a husband who had showed he did not value it, and had chosen to escape from me.

"But I do not *mean* to intrude upon him," I replied; "I mean to be concealed in Paris, and with Alice and Juan to attend me; I fear nothing for myself, nor need you fear for me."

"What!" cried my aunt, "be in Paris, and not let the vile man know you are there? *I* should discover myself, if it were only for the sake of reproaching him;

for *I* should treat him very differently, I assure you. *I* should show him

> "Earth has a rage with love to hatred turned,
> And love has fury by a woman spurned."

"But you are not *Helen*, my dear," said my uncle, meekly sighing as he always did over her misquotations; and still he argued, and I resisted, when I obtained an unexpected assistant in our kind physician.

"My dear sir," said he, "if your niece remains here in compliance with your wishes, I well know that her mind and her feelings will prey upon her life, and ultimately destroy it, if they do not unsettle her reason. But if she is allowed to be active, and to indulge at whatever risk her devoted affection to her husband, depend on it she will be well and comparatively happy: nor do I see that she runs any great risk. She is an Ame-

rican; her two servants are the same, and are most devotedly attached to her: and I give my opinion, both as a physician and a friend, that she had better go."

Oh, how I loved the good old man for what he said! and my uncle and aunt were now contented to yield the point; but my uncle insisted on defraying all my expenses.

"They will be trifling," said I; "for I shall not choose to travel as a lady, but to dress as plainly, travel as cheaply, and attract as little attention as I can."

This he approved; but, in case I should want money to purchase services either for myself or my husband, he insisted on my sewing into my stays ten bank notes of a hundred pounds each, and I accepted them in case of emergencies, as I thought I had no right to refuse what might be of service to my husband."

"Would I were not an old man!" said

my uncle; "then you should not *go alone*, Helen." But I convinced him that any English friend would only be a detriment to me.

Lord Charles Belmour, on hearing of my design, left London, and the career of dissipation in which he was more than ever engaged, to argue with me, to expostulate with me, to *entreat* that I would not go, and risk my precious life, which no man living was worthy to have sacrificed for him, and then burst into tears of genuine feeling when he bade me adieu, wishing that "Heaven had made *him* such a woman;" and, while envying the husband of a virtuous wife, went back to a new mistress, and renewed his course of error.

At length the day of my departure arrived; and plainly attired, I set off for the port of Great Yarmouth, attended by my two faithful servants.

Juan and Alice were both slaves on part of our American property; but they were born on the estate of a French proprietor, therefore French was their native tongue, which was a fortunate circumstance. As soon as my father was their master he made them free, and they became man and wife. They had lived with my mother ever since. She, as I before said, had desired they should be made independent for life. It is no wonder, therefore, the faithful creatures were devoted to the daughter of their benefactress, and I had the most cheering confidence in the tried sagacity as well as integrity of both. Their colour, you know, was what is called mulatto, and their appearance was less distinguished by ugliness than is usually the case with such persons.

I thought it necessary to give this little history of two beings whom I learnt to

love even in my childhood, and who in the season of my affliction added to that love the feeling of interminable gratitude.

Well, behold us landed at Altona, and designated in our passports as Mrs. Helen Pendarves, and Juan and Alice Duval, Americans. After a tedious journey in the carts of the country, and sometimes in its horrible waggons, behold me also arrived in the metropolis of blood, passports examined and approved, and all my greatest difficulties at an end. So relieved was my mind, when every thing was arranged and I had hitherto gotten on so well, that my affectionate companions observed with delighted wonder, that my cheek glowed and my eyes sparkled once more: but cautious Juan advised me to hide my face as much as possible, for there were no such faces in Paris, he believed. When however I found myself in Paris,

when I knew that the being I loved best was there, and yet I dared not seek him, sorrow destroyed my recovered bloom again, and tears dimmed my eyes. Yet still I felt a strange overpowering satisfaction in knowing that I was *near* him; and when we had found out his abode, I thought that I could perhaps contrive to see him, myself unseen. But I found a letter addressed to me *poste restante*, which not only dimmed the brightness of my prospects, but damped much of my enthusiastic ardour in the task which I had undertaken, and even abated some of my tenderness for Pendarves: for I could no longer shut my eyes to the nature of his attachment to Annette Beauvais.

My uncle told me in his letter that Lord Martindale was returned to London, but could not stay there, and was on his way to America; that he had met him in a shop; that, on hearing his name,

Lord Martindale had the effrontery to introduce himself, and thanked him for having enabled him so easily to get rid of a mistress of whom he was tired.

"Indeed," said he, "I am much obliged to the family of Pendarves; for the uncle forces my mistress to go back to her native place, and the nephew takes her off my hands, and under his own protection.

"And I have the honour to assure you, sir," said he, "that if you visit Paris, and the Rue Rivoli, *numero* 22, you will there find your nephew romantically happy with a most fascinating *chère amie* who had once the honour of bearing my name."

"I turned from him," adds my uncle, "with disgust, as you, I hope, will turn from your unworthy husband, and come back, my dearest niece, to your affectionate and anxious uncle."

For one moment I felt inclined to obey his wishes—my husband really living with an abandoned woman, as her avowed protector! wife, country, reputation, sacrificed for her sake!

Horrible and disgusting it was indeed! But I soon recollected, that if it was really a duty in me to come to Paris for his sake at all, it was equally a duty now, for his criminality could not destroy his claims on my duty; nor could his breach of duty excuse the neglect of mine. In short, whether love or conscience influenced me, I know not, but I resolved to stay where I was. And so he was in the Rue Rivoli! I was glad to know where he was, but I did not as before wish to see him, and even to gaze on him unseen. No: I felt him degraded, and I thought that I should now turn away if I met him.

We took a pleasant and retired lodging on the Italian Boulevards; but I

soon found that in this situation we were not likely to learn any tidings of Pendarves; and by the time we had been ten days at Paris, Juan and I resolved, having first *felt our way*, to put a plan which we had formed into execution.

It was absolutely necessary that we should have opportunities of knowing what was going forward in public affairs, in order to learn the degree of safety or of danger in which Pendarves was; and if Madame Beauvais had really been a spy in London for the Convention, she must be connected with the governing persons in Paris.

Accordingly, we hired a small house which had stood empty some time in a street through which most of the members of the National Convention were likely to pass in their way to and fro. The street-door opened into a front parlour, and that into a second parlour: of

this with a kitchen and two chambers consisted the whole of the house. Humble as it was, I assure you it was on the plan of one which Robespierre occupied in the zenith of his power.

The windows of the front parlour Juan converted into a sort of shop-window; and as he and his wife were both good bakers, they filled it with a variety of cakes, which they called *gateaux républicains;* and it was not long before, to our great joy, they obtained an excellent sale for their commodity. This emboldened us to launch out still more; and in hopes that our shop might become a sort of resting and lounging place to the men in power as they passed, Juan put a coat of paint on the outside of the house, converted the parlour into a complete shop, and at length put a notice over the door in large tricolour letters, importing that at such hours every day plum and plain pudding

à l'Américaine was to be had *hot*, as well as *gateaux républicains*.

If this *affiche* succeeded, there was a *chance* of Juan's hearing something relative to the objects of our anxiety from the members of the Convention, while I myself, hidden behind the glass-door of the back parlour, might also overhear some *to me* important conversation. At any rate, it was worth the trial; and experience proved that the scheme was not as visionary as it at first appeared.

It was not without considerable emotion that I saw our shop opened, and business prospering. Never, surely, was there a more curious and singular situation than mine. Think of me, the daughter of an American Loyalist, living an unprotected woman in the metropolis of republican France, and helping to make puddings and cakes for the members of the National Convention!

Though I have never paused in my narrative to mention politics, still you cannot suppose that I was ignorant of what was passing on the great theatre of the Continent, nor that the names of the chief actors in it were unknown to me. On the contrary, I often beguiled my lonely hours with reading the accounts of the proceedings at Paris; had mourned not only over the fate of the royal family, but had deplored the death of those highly gifted men, and that great though mistaken woman (Madame Roland) in whom I fancied that I perceived some of the republican virtue to which others only *pretended;* and though far from being a Republican myself, I could not but respect those who, having adopted a principle however erroneous, acted upon it consistently. But with Brissot and his party ended all my interest in the public men of France, though their names were familiar to me, and aversion and dread

were the only feelings which they excited.

Therefore, when on the 1st of February 1794 we opened a shop for puddings and cakes, and I through the curtain of a glass-door saw it thronged with customers, some of whom I concluded were regicides and murderers, my heart died within me. I felt as if I stood in the den of wild beasts, and I wished myself again in safe and happy England.

Juan was frequently asked a number of questions by his customers; such as who he was, and whence he came, and how long he had been there; and his answer was, that he was born in America, and born a slave, and so was his little wife, but a good master made him free.

"Bravo! and *Vive la liberté!* and You are like us; We were slaves, now we are free," always shouted the deluded people to whom he thus talked.

Juan used to go on to say that he had

heard his master was in France, and poor, and so they left America and came to work for him (applauses again); but that he found he was dead. "And so," said he, "as I liked Paris, we resolved to stay here, and make nice things for the republicans in Europe."

This tale had its effect; Juan was hailed as the *bon citoyen* Duval, and promised custom and protection.

"Oh! dear Miss Helen," cried Juan, (as he usually called me) "what bloody dogs some of them look! No doubt some of them were members of parliament. *They* govern a nation indeed, who were such fools as to be so easily taken in by my story! Psha! I should make a better parliament man myself."

At length, we saw some of the distinguished men.

Juan heard one of the party call two of the others Hebert and Danton; and he

made an excuse to come in and tell me which was which. I looked at them, and was mortified to find that Danton was so pleasant-looking.

When they went away, which they did not do till they had eaten largely, and commended what they ate, a wild, singular-looking man entered the shop, in all the dirty and negligent attire of a *sans culotte*, and desired a plum pudding *à l'Américaine* to be set before him; declaring that had it been *à l'Anglaise* he could not have eaten it, as it would have tasted of the slavery of that wretched grovelling country England. When the pudding was served, he talked more than he ate, and made minute inquiries into the history of Alice and Juan; but when he heard who and what they were, he ran to them, and insisted on giving each the fraternal embrace—"for I," said he, "am Anacharsis Cloots! the orator of the hu-

man race; and dear to my heart is the injured being who was born in servitude. Blessed be the memory of the master who broke your chains!"

He then resumed his questions, and, to my great alarm, desired to know if they lived alone in the house. Juan, off his guard, replied,

"No; we have a lodger."

"Indeed! let me see him."

"Him! 'tis a woman."

"Better and better still! Let me see *her* then. Is she young and handsome?"

"*Hélas! la pauvre femme! elle ne voit personne, elle est malade à la mort**."

"*Eh bien, que je la voye! Je la guérirai moi*†."

* Alas! poor woman! she is sick to death.

† Well, let me see her: I will cure her.

" Tu! citoyen? Oh non! elle ne se guérira jamais *."

" Mais oui, te dis-je. Où est-elle? Je veux absolument faire sa connaissance †."

" C'est impossible. Elle est au lit ‡."

" Quest-ce que cela fait § *?"*

" Comment, les femmes chez nous ne reçoivent jamais les visites quand elles sont au lit ||."

" Mais, quelle bêtise! au moins dis moi son nom, qui elle est, et tout cela ¶."

* You! citizen? Oh no! she will never be cured.

† Yes, I tell you. Where is she? I will absolutely make her acquaintance.

‡ Impossible. She is in bed.

§ What does that signify?

|| Our ladies never receive visits in bed.

¶ What nonsense! But tell me her name and all that.

And Juan told him that I was the relation of his benefactor; that I was in reduced circumstances, having had a bad husband; and that he and his wife had taken me to live with them, and never would desert me.

"*O les braves gens!*" exclaimed he. —But what an agony I endured all this time! Afraid that this mad-headed enthusiast would really insist on paying me a visit, I ran up stairs, put on my green spectacles which Juan insisted on my buying (for he really thought me a perfect beauty, and that all who looked must love); then tied up my face in a handkerchief, pulled over it a slouch cap, and lay down on the bed, drawing the curtains round. But Alice came up to tell me the strange man was gone. He declared, however, that the next time he came he would see *la pauvre malade.*

But fortunately we never saw him

again, except when he stopped in company with others, and was too much taken up in laying down the law for the benefit of the human race, to remember an individual.

You will not be surprised when I tell you, that slight as was my knowledge of the persons of Hebert and Anacharsis Cloots, and little as I had heard of their voices, still the circumstance of having seen their faces and heard them speak made all the difference between rejoicing at their deserved fate and regretting it. They were guillotined during the course of the next month; and I shuddered when I heard they were no more, catching myself saying, "Poor men!" very frequently during the rest of the day.

I could give you some interesting details of many events that now happened in affecting succession; but they have been painted by abler hands than mine:

I shall only say further concerning our shop-visiters, that more than once the great Dictator himself took shelter there from a shower of rain, and ate a *gateau républicain*. When he first came, Juan, who had seen him often before, sent Alice to tell me who he was; and I cannot describe the sensation of horror with which he inspired me; for nature there had made the outside equally ugly with the inside. He asked many questions of Juan relative to who he was, and whence and why he came; and I saw his quick and restless eye looking suspiciously round, as if he feared an unseen dagger on every side: and so watchful and observant was his glance, that I retreated from the curtain lest he should see me. I was also terrified to perceive that my poor Juan was not so much at his ease with *him*, and did not tell his story with so steady a voice as usual. But perhaps

like Lewis the Fourteenth, Robespierre was flattered with the consciousness of inspiring awe. Juan was, however, a little relieved by the entrance of Danton, who spoke to him as an old acquaintance; on which Robespierre turned to Danton and said, "Then *you know* these people?"

"Yes; and their puddings too. Do I not, citizen?" he good-naturedly replied; and soon after, Robespierre and he departed together.

Certain it is that I breathed more freely after they were gone.

Not long after this, Danton and Camille des Moulins came together; and though they spoke very low, Juan heard them talk of *la Citoyenne Beauvais*, and then they talked of *son bel Américain Anglois* *, (so it was clear they knew who my husband really was,) and they

* Her handsome American Englishman.

whispered and laughed. We then heard the name of *Colonel Newton*, an Englishman by birth, who had served in foreign armies all his life, and had the melancholy distinction of being the *only British subject* who was put to death by the guillotine *. But Juan heard him mentioned by these men, and soon after we knew he *was arrested;* for Juan was in the habit of frequenting the Palais Royal and its gardens in an evening, and other places of public resort, and there he was sure to hear the news of the day. At first, he only heard that an *Englishman* was arrested; and his emotion was such, that if any one had looked at him it must have been perceived; but no one noticed him, and presently some one named Colonel Newton as the conspirator who had been denounced and imprisoned.

* See Miss Williams's Letters.

Was Pendarves acquainted with this unfortunate man? We could not tell; but certain it was, that the awful lips which mentioned the one had named the other.

In another month Danton and Camille des Moulins were themselves no more! and fell with many others who were obnoxious to the tyrant; and again I wished that I had not seen or heard them.

As I never went out till it was quite dark, the great seclusion in which I lived injured my health. Since the death of Hebert, indeed, I was not so cautious, as I could wear a hat; but while he lived, he had decreed that every head-dress was *aristocrat*, except the peasants' cap.

Juan went therefore to find a lodging for me for a week or two near or in the Champs Elysés, and in so retired a spot, that with my green spectacles, and otherwise a little disguised, my guardian declared he allowed me to walk even in a morning.

Alice accompanied me, and Juan promised to come and tell us every evening what was going forward. During my abode in this pretty place Juan arrived one evening a good deal agitated, and I found that he had seen Pendarves.

"Did he see you?"

"Oh! no: he saw no one but—"

"His companion, I suppose?—Was Madame Beauvais with him?"

"She was, and her little dog; and the beast would not come at her call: and then she was uneasy, and so *he* took up the nasty animal and carried it in his arm. I could have wrung its neck."

"It is a nice clean animal," replied I, trying to speak cheerfully. "But how did he look, Juan?"

"Well, madam—*too* well!" said the faithful creature, turning away in agony to think he *could* look well under his circumstances.

"You see he is not yet arrested," said I; "and for that I am thankful."

One night, the night before we were to return to our house, Juan disappointed us and did not come at all. You, who have always lived in dear and quiet Britain, cannot form to yourself an idea of the agitation into which this little circumstance threw us. We could not fancy he was ill: that was too commonplace and too natural a circumstance to occur to the heated imaginations of women accustomed as we were to tales of terror and blood; and we thought no less than that he had been suspected, denounced, arrested, and would be *jugé à mort*. What a night of misery was ours! Early in the morning, however, Alice set off for Paris, conjuring me on her knees not to come with her, as Juan thought it unsafe for me to walk in the street unprotected; and promising to

come back directly if any thing alarming had happened. I therefore allowed her to depart without me; but though her not returning was a proof that all was right, according to our agreement, I was half distracted when hour succeeded to hour and she did not return; till, at last, unable to bear my suspense any longer, I set off for Paris, and reached the Place de la Revolution (as it was then called) just as an immense crowd was thronging from all parts and around me, to a spot already filled with an incalculable number of persons. In one instant I recollected that what I beheld in the midst must be the guillotine, and I tried to turn back, but it was impossible. I was hurried forward with the exulting multitude; and just as the horrible snap of the murderous engine met my now tingling ears, I heard from the shouts of the mob, that the victim was the Princess Elizabeth!!!—Self-

preservation instinctively prompted me to catch hold of the person next me to save myself from falling, which would have been instant death; and the aid I sought was yielded to me: and while a noise of thunder was in my ears, and my eyes were utterly blinded with horror and agonizing emotion, a kind but unknown voice said in French, "Poor child! I see you are indeed a stranger here. We natives are used to these sights now:" and he sighed, as if use had not however entirely blunted his feelings.

"But why did you come to see such a sight?"

"Oh! I knew nothing of it, and was going home."

"Poor thing! Well; but shall I see you home—if you can walk?"

I now looked up, and saw that my kind friend was only a lowly citizen, and wore a Jacobin cap; and I was still shrinking

from allowing of his further attendance, though I trembled in every limb, and felt sick unto death: when, as the crowd dispersed, I saw Juan and Alice coming towards me; in another moment I was in her arms, where I nearly fainted away.

"This is unfortunate," said the *citoyen;* "her illness may be observed upon, as it was a Bourbon who died, and she may be fancied no friend to the republic. What is best to be done?"

While he said this I recovered, and begged to go home directly; but I could not walk without the aid of my Jacobin friend; who insisted on seeing me safe home, and we thought it the best way to consent.

On our way, the *citoyen* exclaimed, "*O mon Dieu! le voilà lui-même*!*" and we saw the dreaded Robespierre has-

* Oh! there he is himself.

tily approaching us. He desired to know what was the matter with that woman; and neither Juan nor Alice had recollection enough to reply; but our friend did instantly, taking off his cap as he spoke: "The poor woman, *citoyen*, was nearly crushed in the crowd, and but for me would have been trodden to death. Only see how she trembles still! She has not been able to speak a word yet."

"Oh! that is the case, is it?" said he, surveying me with a most scrutinizing glance. "It is well for her I find her in such good company, Benoit."

He then departed, and we recovered our recollection.

He was no sooner gone, than, to my great surprise, I saw Juan seize our companion's hand, while he exclaimed, "You! are you Benoit?"

"To be sure; what then?"

"Why then, you God for ever bless

that's all! For many poor wretch bless you; and now, but for you, what might have become of *her?*"

"How!" cried Alice; "is this the kind jailor of the Luxembourg? Oh dear! how glad I am to see you!"

It was indeed Benoit; who, at a period when to be cruel seemed the only means to be safe, lightened the fetters which he could not remove, and soothed to the best of his power the horrors of a prison and of death.

A feeling which he could not help, but certainly not one of joyful anticipation, led him to witness the death of the royal victim; and my evident horror instantly interested and attached him to my side. This good man attended us home, and we had great pleasure in setting before him all our little stores: but *he could not eat then,* he said; and as he spoke, he sighed deeply. However, he assured us

he would come and eat with us some other day: then desiring us to take heed and not go to see sights again, he ran off, saying he had been absent too long.

What a mercy it was that Benoit was with us when we met the tyrant! We also rejoiced that he did not see or did not recognise Juan and Alice: but after this unfortunate rencontre we did not feel ourselves as safe as we did before, and dreaded every day to see him enter the shop.

I now desired to know the reason of Juan's not coming to us, and I found that his too great care had exposed me to even a far *worse* agony than that from which he wished to preserve me. The truth was, he heard that poor Madame Elizabeth was to be executed the next day: fearing, therefore, that he should be betrayed into saying so, and wishing me not to know of it till all was over, as he knew how interested I was in

her fate, he resolved to stay away, not supposing we should be alarmed; and he and Alice could not return to me sooner, as the way led over the very spot which they wished to avoid. Besides, Alice had told me her *not* returning was a good sign. Well! this agony was past; but I had seen and met the suspicious eye of the tyrant, and it haunted me wherever I went. For my own life, indeed, I had no fear; and imprisonment, I thought, was all I had to dread, though poor Juan insisted on it that the wretch saw, spite of my dowdy appearance, that I was a handsome woman; and he thanked Heaven at the close of every day, that no Robespierre had visited us. Another evening Juan returned in much agitation from his walk, but I saw it was of an opposite nature to that which he experienced at sight of Pendarves; and on inquiry I

found that he had, as he said, met that *good* young man, Count de Walden.

"Indeed!" exclaimed I; "and did he see you? and does he know I am in Paris?"

"No, he did not see me; and without your leave, I dared not tell you were here: so I thought it best not speak to him."

I felt excessively disappointed; but after some moments of reflection I recollected that it would be *cruel* and *selfish* to force myself, in a situation so interesting and so anxious, on one who on principle had so recently left the place in which I was; and I told Juan he had done quite right.

"However," said I, "it is a comfort to me to know that I have a protector near."

"Aye; but not for long!"

"No! But what could bring a man like him to this den of wickedness and horrors? Some good purpose, no doubt."

"I suspect so; for I saw him in close conversation with Barrère and others, and I overheard him say, 'But can you give me no hope? I want excessively to return home: still, while there is a chance of Colonel Newton's being saved, I will stay.' Barrère, I believe, said all hope was over; for the Count cast up his eyes mournfully to heaven, and retired."

Till I heard this, I was inclined to suspect that my uncle had written to say I was here, and that he came on my account.

I shall now relate the motive of his journey: the object of it was connected with the fate of my husband.

A man of the name of Beauvais was executed with Danton and other supposed conspirators in the preceding April. This

man was the father of Annette Beauvais; and she would have been denounced and executed with her father, had not one of Robespierre's tools become exceedingly enamoured of her, and for his sake she was spared. But Colonel Newton having been known to be rather intimate with Beauvais, and having also dared, like a free-born Englishman and a man of independent feelings, to reproach the tyrant with his cruelty, he was accused, imprisoned, and condemned to death. It was on *his account* that De Walden came to Paris. By some means or other Newton informed him of his situation; and as he had known him in Switzerland, and greatly esteemed him, he hastened to try whether by solicitation, interest, or money, he could procure his acquittal or escape: but he tried in vain. As vain also were the efforts made,—to do her justice,—by Madame Beauvais herself.

The wretch to whom she applied was made jealous of Newton by her earnest entreaties for his life; and his doom was consequently rendered only more certain. He also tauntingly bade her take care of her own life and that of her American Englishman, assuring her she would not find it an easy matter to do that long. Nor did he threaten in vain; for, though she admitted his addresses and received his splendid presents, she still persisted in living with the infatuated Pendarves, who believed her constancy equal to her pretended love. The consequence was, that an accusation was brought against my husband for getting to Paris on false pretences, and as being a dangerous person: for, though he was born in America, his father was a loyalist, not a republican, and had fought, they found, against the republican arms; and his mother was that offensive thing a woman of quality

and a nobleman's daughter. There were other charges equally *strong;* and even in the presence of his vile companion, Pendarves was arrested, and condemned for the present to be confined *au secret* in the Luxembourg.

He bore his fate with calmness; for he expected that she who had caused his imprisonment would be eager to share and to enliven it: but that was beyond the heroism of a *mistress*. She was not willing to prefer to fine apartments and liberty, love and a prison with him; but while he, agonized at her desertion, —for she bade him a cold and final farewell,—was borne away into confinement, she was led away smiling and in triumph by her now avowed protector!

All these circumstances I did not know at first—I only knew the result; which was imparted to me by the trembling Juan, who had seen Pendarves led away,

had seen her farewell, and had vainly tried to make himself observed by him, that he might know he had a friend at hand.

"A friend!" cried I with a flushed cheek, but with a trembling frame: "he shall know that he has the *best* of friends, a *wife*, near him!" and instantly, taking no precaution to conceal my person in any way, for I thought not of myself, I hastened rapidly along, Juan with difficulty keeping pace with me, till I reached the Luxembourg.

"Whom do you want?" said a churlish man on duty.

"Seymour Pendarves."

"You can't see him: he is *au secret*."

"Oh! but I must! Do let me speak to the *Citoyen* Benoit, and ask him to let me enter.

"You are very earnest; and perhaps he will let you."

"Who shall I say wants to be admitted to this Pendarves?"

"His wife."

"His wife! Well," added he respectfully, "wives should not be kept from their husbands when they seek them in their distress."

He then went in search of Benoit, who appeared with his keys of office.

"*Citoyen*," said he, "here is a wife wants to see her husband."

"I fear she is an aristocrat, then," replied Benoit, smiling and approaching us.

"Ha!" cried he, "is it you? What is become of your spectacles? And do you want to see your *husband*, poor thing? Who is he?"

I told him. He shook his head, saying to himself—"Who could have supposed he had a wife, and such a one too!"

"*Citoyenne*," said he, "you cannot see your husband to-night, nor shall he

know you are here; but to-morrow, at nine in the morning, I will admit you. Yes, and *for your sake* I will show him all the indulgence I can. So it was for this, was it, you came to Paris? I thought there was a mystery. Good girl! good girl!"

So saying, he walked hastily away, and we returned to our home, at once *disappointed* and *cheered.*

Oh! how I longed for the light of morning! Oh! how I longed to exhibit the superiority of the wife over the mistress! With what pleasure I anticipated the joy, mixed with shame and sorrow, no doubt, but still triumphant over every other feeling with which Pendarves would behold and receive me! How he would value this proof of tenderness and duty! while I should fondly assure him that all was forgotten and all forgiven!—So did I paint the scene to which I was hasten-

ing. Such were the hopes which flushed my cheek and irradiated my countenance.

At length the appointed hour drew near; and I had just reached the gates of the Luxembourg, had just desired to be shown to Benoit, when I looked up and beheld De Walden!

"You here!" cried he, turning pale as death. "O Helen! dear rash friend! why are you in Paris? Speak."

Here he paused, trembling with emotion. I was little less affected; but, making a great effort, I faltered out, "My *husband* is prisoner here, and I am going to him."

De Walden clasped his hands together and was silent; but his look declared the agony of his mind.

Benoit now came to conduct me in; and De Walden, taking Juan's arm, led him apart.

"Have you told him I am here?" said

I, turning very faint, alarmed now the moment was come which I had so delightedly anticipated.

"No: I have told him nothing."

He now put the key into a door at the bottom of a long, narrow, dark passage, and it turned on its heavy and grating hinges.

"Some one desires to see you," said Benoit *gruffly*, to hide his kind emotion; and I stood before my long estranged husband. But where was the look of gladness? where the tone of *welcome*, though it might be mingled with that of less pleasant sensations? He started, turned pale, pressed forward to meet me; but then exclaiming in a faltering voice, "Is it you, Helen? Rash girl! why do I see you here?" he sunk upon his miserable bed, and hid his face from me. I stood motionless, pale, and silent as a statue. Was

this the scene which I had painted to myself? True, I should have been shocked, if he had approached me with extended arms, and as if he felt that I had nothing to forget: yet I did expect that his eye would lighten up with joyful surprise, and his quivering lip betray the tenderness which he *would* but *dared* not express. However, for the first time in my life, indignation and a sense of injury were stronger than my fond woman's feeling; and I seated myself in silence on the only chair in the room, with my proud heart swelling as if it would burst its bounds and give me ease for ever.

"Helen!" said he at length in a subdued and dejected tone, "your presence here distracts me. This scene, this city, are no places for you; and oh! how unworthy am I of this exertion of love! What!

must a wretch like me expose to danger such an exalted creature as this is?"

These flattering words, though uttered from the head more than from the heart, were a sort of balm to my wounded feelings; but I coldly replied, That in coming to Paris, in order to be on the spot if any danger happened to him, I had only done what I considered as the duty of a wife; and that now my earnest wish was to be allowed to spend part if not the whole of every day with him in prison as his friend and soother."

"Impossible! impossible!" he exclaimed, becoming much agitated.

"Why so? Benoit is disposed to be my friend."

"No matter; but tell me who is with you in this nest of villains?"

I told him, and he thanked God audibly. I then entreated to know some-

thing concerning his arrest, its cause, and what the consequences were likely to be.

"Spare me!" cried he, "spare me! It is most painful to a man to blush with shame in the presence of his wife. Helen! kind, good Helen! I know you meant to sooth and serve me; but you have *humbled* me to the dust, and my spirit sinks before you! Go and leave me to perish. In my very *best* days I was wholly unworthy of you; but *now*—"

He was right; and my *parading* kindness, my *intruding* virtue were offensive. I *had* humbled him: I had *obliged him too much:* I had *towered over him in the superiority of my character;* and instead of *attaching*, I had *alienated* him. This was human nature—I saw it, I owned it now, but I was not prepared for it, and it overwhelmed me with despair. Still, it softened my heart in his favour; for, if I had to forgive *his errors*, *he* had to

forgive my officious exhibition of *romantic duty*. I now at his request told him all my plans, and every thing that had passed since I came, not omitting to tell him that I had seen *De Walden*. Nor was I sorry to remark, that at his name he started and changed colour.

"He here! Then you are sure of a protector," said he, "and I feel easier. But, Helen! you are too young, too lovely to expose yourself to the gaze of the men in power. I protest that you are at this moment as beautiful as ever, Helen!"

"It is from the temporary embellishment of strong emotion only," replied I, pleased by this compliment from him. I then turned the discourse to the opportunity our shop gave us of hearing conversations; and I also promised to bring him some of our commodities. He tried to smile, but could not, and I saw that my presence evidently distressed instead

of soothing him. Benoit now came to say I must stay no longer, and disappeared again; while, a prey to most miserable feelings, I rose to depart.

"I shall come again to-morrow," said I; "shall I not?"

"If you insist upon it, you shall; but, you had better leave me, Helen, to perish, and forget me!"

"Forget you! Cruel Seymour!" cried I, bursting into an agony of tears.

He now approached me, and, sinking on one knee, took my hand and kissed it: then held it to his heart. A number of feelings now contended in my bosom, but affection was predominant; and as he knelt before me I threw my arms round his neck, mingling my tears with his, "*Mais vite donc, citoyenne—dépêches tu*!*" said Benoit, just unclosing the door, and speaking outside it. Pendarves

* Quick, make haste, female citizen!

rose, and led me to him; and, scarcely knowing whether pain or satisfaction predominated, I reached the gate, Benoit kindly assuring me I might command his services to the utmost.

I found De Walden still talking with Juan. They both seemed to regard me with very scrutinizing as well as sympathizing looks; and I still trembled so much that I was glad to accept the support of De Walden's arm. He attended me home; but we neither of us spoke during the walk. When I reached the door, I said, "Come to me to breakfast to-morrow; for to-day I am wholly unfitted for company." He sighed, bowed, and departed; but not without assuring me that he would inquire concerning the causes of my husband's arrest, and try to get him set at liberty.

"Well," cried Juan, "I have one comfort more than I had; Count DeWal-

den has declared that while you remain in Paris *he* will." And I also felt comforted by this assurance.

I now retired to my own room, and, throwing myself on the bed, entered upon that severe task self-examination; and I learnt to doubt whether my expedition to France were as truly and singly the result of pure and genuine tenderness, and a sense of duty, as I had supposed it was. For what had I done? I had certainly shone in the eyes of many at the expense of my husband. I had, as he said, "humbled him in his own eyes," and I had chosen to run risks for his sake, which he could not approve, and after all might not be the better for. In such reflections as these I passed that long and miserable day; aye, and in some worse still; for I felt that Pendarves no longer loved me—that he esteemed, he respected, he admired me; but that his

tenderness was gone, and gone too, probably, for ever!

I had however one pleasant idea to dwell upon. Deputies, if not an ambassador, were now expected from America, and De Walden had told Juan he should claim their protection for us.

The next morning De Walden came; but his brow was clouded, his manner embarrassed, and the tone of his voice mournful.

"Have you made the inquiries which you promised?"

"I have; and they have not been answered satisfactorily. My dear friend, there are subjects which nothing but the emergencies of the case could justify me to discuss with you. Will you therefore pardon me if I say—"

"Say any thing: at a moment like this it is my duty not to shrink from the truth. I guess what you mean."

He then told me the cause of my husband's arrest, which I have already mentioned; adding that the ostensible causes were so trifling, that they could probably be easily gotten over; but that the true cause, *jealousy*, was, he feared, not likely to be removed.

"But she left him," cried I, "left him as if for ever, and accompanied her new lover in triumph!"

"Yes: but I fear that he will not get quit of her so soon."

My only answer to this unwelcome truth was a deep sigh; and for some minutes I was unable to speak, while De Walden anxiously walked up and down the room.

"Perhaps you would go and see Pendarves?"

"No: excuse me: an interview between me and him must be painful, and could not be beneficial. The letter I had

from him to inform me of a certain mournful event was cold; and though I answered it kindly,—for I thought of you when I wrote,—I was convinced that the less we met again the better."

"Then what can you do?"

"I know not—I could not save my *friend*, you know."

"If money can do it, I possess the means."

"And so do I; but Robespierre is inaccessible to bribes, and so I have found his creatures. I fear that I must seek Madame Beauvais herself."

"But she probably hates you?"

"True: but she does not hate Pendarves; and if I convince her that her only chance of liberating him is by seeming to have ceased to love him, the business may be done."

"And must he owe his liberty, and per-

haps his life, to her? But be it so, if he can be preserved no other way—in that case I would even be a suitor to her myself."

"That I could not bear. But oh! dear, inconsiderate friend, why did you come hither?"

"Because I thought it my duty."

"And do you still think so?"

I was silent.

"Answer me, candid and generous Helen: do you not *now* see that it was more your duty to stay in your own safe country, protected by respectable friends, than to come hither courting danger, and the worst of dangers to a virtuous wife? Believe me, the passive virtue of painful but quiet *endurance* of injury was the virtue for you to practise. This quixotic daring *looked* like duty; but *was not duty*, Helen, and could only end in disappointment: for tell me, have you not found

that you have thus suffered and thus dared for an ingrate ?"

My *silence* answered the question.

"Enough!" resumed De Walden; "and I feel that I have been cruel; but mine has been the reproof of friendship, *wrung* from me by the indignant agony of knowing that even *I* cannot perhaps protect you from the insults which I dread. Oh! *why* did they *let* you come hither ? I am *sure* your mind was not itself when you thought of it."

"You are right. The idea had taken hold of my imagination then unnaturally raised, and come I would. But my physician approved my coming; for he thought it safer for me, and thought, if I was not indulged, that my reason, if not my life, might suffer."

This statement completely overset De Walden's self-command; he blamed himself for what he had said—accused him-

self of cruelty—extolled the patient sweetness with which I had heard him, and had condescended to justify myself. Then, striking his forehead, he exclaimed, "And I, alas! am *powerless* to save a being like this! But save her, THOU," he added, lifting his clasped hands to heaven.

The hour of my appointment at the prison now arrived again, and De Walden accompanied me thither. I did not see Benoit; but I was admitted directly, and my conductor, opening the door, said, "A female citizen desires to see you."

"Indeed!" said Pendarves in a tone of joy; but he started, and looked disappointed, when he saw *me*."

"Is it you, Helen?" said he.

"Did you expect it was any one else?"

"Not much," he replied, evidently disconcerted; "not much. It is only a primitive old-fashioned wife like yourself,

who would follow an unworthy husband to a prison."

"And to a *scaffold*, if necessary," cried I with energy.

"Helen!" said Pendarves in a deep but caustic tone, "spare me! spare me! This excess of goodness—"

I smiled; but I believe my smile was as *bitter* as his *accents*.

What meetings were these between persons circumstanced as we once were and were *now!* But it could not be otherwise, and all I *now* suffered I had brought upon myself. In order to change the tone of our feelings, I told him De Walden had breakfasted with me, and then asked him if he would not like to see Juan.

He said "Yes," but carelessly, and then added, "So De Walden has been with you?" and fell into a mournful reverie till our uncomfortable interview was over.

I promised to send him by Juan all he wanted and desired, of linen, clothes, and food; for Benoit had assured me he would allow him to receive any thing for the sake of *his good wife*. He thanked me, shook my hand kindly, and saw me depart, as I thought, with pleasure.

I found De Walden waiting for me with Juan. The latter by my desire asked for Benoit, and begged to know of him at what hour that day or evening he might be admitted to his master. Accordingly he went, carrying with him the articles I mentioned. He was gone some time; and anxious indeed was I for his return.

"I have *seen* her," said he.

"Seen whom?"

"That vile woman."

"Was she with him?" cried I, turning very faint.

"No, no: let the good Benoit alone

for that. She desired to see the Citoyen Pendarves, *her husband;* on which Benoit scornfully answered, "One wife is enough for *any* man: I allow him to see *one* of his every day, *but no more;* so go away, and do not return again."

"What!" exclaimed the creature, in great agitation, "is she, is Helen Pendarves in Paris?"

"Yes; *she,* the *true* she,—the good wife is here; and *she* alone will Benoit admit to his prisoner. "*Va-t en, te dis-je!*"

"And the creature went away," added Juan; "for I saw and heard it all, giving him such a look!"

I could not help being pleased with this account; but I sent him immediately to tell De Walden what had passed, that he might lose no time in seeking La Beauvais, to prevent her going to the prison, and thereby increasing the dan-

ger of Pendarves.—When Juan returned, I asked for a minute detail of all that passed between my husband and him.

"Oh! he is very wretched!" he replied: "but he told me nothing concerning himself; he only walked up and down the narrow room, asking me nothing but about you, and why they let you come, and if De Walden came on purpose to guard you. In short, we talked of nothing else; and then he did so wish you safe back in your own country!"

This account gave me sincere pleasure, and made me believe that Seymour's heart was not so much alienated from me as I expected; and a weight seemed suddenly taken from my mind. The next day I went again at noon, and I found La Beauvais in high dispute with Benoit. As soon as he saw me, saw that I recognised her, and that my countenance as-

sumed the hue of death, he caught my hand, saying, "*Vite! vite! entre donc:* BELLE *et* BONNE! *et toi, va-t en tout de suite* *!"

La Beauvais, provoked and disappointed, seized my arm. "Madame Pendarves," she cried, "the *same interest* brings us hither: use your influence over this barbarian to procure me admittance."

"The *same* interest!" I replied, turning round, throwing her hand from my arm, and looking at her with all the scorn and abhorrence which I felt: "*Madame, je ne vous connois pas* †."

"*It is well*," she said. "Depend on it, I shall refresh your memory; and soon too. I will be *revenged*, though my own heart bleeds for it."

* Quick! quick! enter: fair and good! but you, go away directly!"

† Madam! I do not know you.

She then hastened away; and I, feeling the rash folly I had committed, and fearing I had irreparably injured my husband's cause, was forced to let the kind jailor conduct me to his own apartment, in order that I might recover myself before I went to Pendarves. I found him more cheerful, and also more affectionate in his manner towards me. He had been reading a letter, which he hastily put into his pocket; yet not so soon but that my quick eye discovered in the address the hand of La Beauvais. It was this renewal of intercourse, then, that had made him cheerful! But why then was he more affectionate to me? I have since resolved that question to my satisfaction.

No one likes to give up any power once possessed. Pendarves had flattered himself La Beauvais fondly loved him; and his bitter grief at her apparent desertion

of him, arose from wounded pride, and the fear of having lost his power over her, more than from pining affection. But she had *written* to him; she was trying to gain admittance to his prison:—his wounded vanity therefore was at rest on one point, and the sight of me was grateful because it ministered to it in another.

But I did not, could not reason then: I only felt; and what with jealousy, and what with my fears for his life, *now*, I thought, endangered *by me*, I was ill and evidently wretched the whole time I staid. But Seymour's manner to me was most soothing, and even tender. At that moment I could better have borne indifference from him; for I was conscious that I had weakly given way to the feelings of an injured jealous woman, and had thereby probably given the seal to his fate!

Glad was I when the jailor summoned

me; for I was anxious to tell De Walden the folly which I had committed; and I saw that Seymour was hurt at the cold and hurried manner in which I bade him farewell.

When I saw De Walden, he told me that he had called in vain on La Beauvais hitherto; but would try again and again. On hearing what had passed between us he became alarmed, but declared that he could not have forgiven me if I had spoken or acted otherwise. That day some of the tyrant's creatures were in our shop, and one of them desired to see the other shop-woman, declaring Alice was not pretty enough to wait on them; and that they were resolved the next time they came to see *la belle Angloise.*—But every other fear was soon swallowed up in one.

Juan overheard that night in the Thuilleries gardens, that the *Englishman*

Pendarves would be brought before the tribunal *the day after the next*, and there was no doubt of his being executed with several others *directly!!!*

The moment, the dreaded moment was now indeed at hand, and how was it to be averted? De Walden heard this intelligence also, and came to me immediately. But all hope seemed vain, because he was to be condemned to satisfy private wishes, and not because any public wrong could be proved against him; and he left me in utter despair. But he also left me to reflect; and the result was a determination to act resolutely and immediately, and to risk the event. Suffice, that I called my faithful servants into my room, reminded them of that fidelity and obedience to me which they had vowed to my poor mother on her death-bed, and told them the hour for them to prove their attachment and fulfil their vow was

now arrived. This solemn adjuration was answered by as solemn assurances to obey me in whatever I required of them. I *first* required that they should keep *all* I was now going to say, and all they or I I were *going* to do, profoundly secret from *De Walden*. I saw Juan recoil at this; but I was firm, and he *swore* himself to secrecy. I then unfolded to them my scheme, and had to encounter tears, entreaties urged on bended knee, that I would give up my rash design, and consider myself. But they might as well have talked to the winds. "I feel," said I, "by the suddenness of this proceeding, that my treatment of La Beauvais has done this, and it is my duty, at all risks to myself, to save my husband from the death to which I have hurried him." The faithful creatures were silenced, but not convinced. Still, finding they could not prevent my purpose, and that I declared

I would cry "*Vive le Roi*," that I might die with my husband, they prepared in mournful obedience to consult with me on the best means of accomplishing my wishes.

My plan was this: I resolved to ask permission to take a last farewell of Pendarves at night, after I had seen him in the morning, and then change clothes with him, and remain in his stead.

"And as Benoit was ill in bed this evening, when you went," said I, "there is no likelihood that he will be well to-morrow; so my plan cannot injure him. Therefore, let us be prepared to execute what I have designed, directly."

"Well! my comfort is," said Juan, "that my master will never consent to risk your life in order to save his own."

"Not willingly; but I shall *force* him to do it."

"Well! we shall see."

You may remember how I used to regret my great height, because Pendarves did not admire tall women; but now how I valued it, as it made it more easy for Pendarves to pass for me, and therefore might aid my efforts to save his life!

We agreed that Alice and Juan should be in waiting with a covered peasant's cart, at the end of the Luxembourg gardens; that then he should drive him and her to our lodging in the Champs Elisés, which we had again hired, where he was to pass for me, and still hide his face as if in great affliction. The house was kept by a deaf, stupid old woman, who was not likely to suspect any thing. And at day-break, Pendarves in a peasant's dress, with Alice by his side, dressed like a peasant also, with her hood over her face, was to drive on day and night when he had passed the barrier, which we hoped it would be easy to do, till some

place of safe retreat offered itself on the road. And I knew that on this road was the *chateau* of a gentleman whom we had known and had done kindnesses to in England, who had contrived like some others to take no part in politics, and had retained his house and his land.

All was procured and ready as I desired; and, having written down my scheme for my husband, conjuring him to grant my request, I went to the prison in the morning with a beating heart, lest Benoit should be well enough to be at his post. But he was not only unwell; he was dismissed from his office. The *bon Benoit*, as he was called, was too good for his situation *.

Seymour beheld with wonder, and no small alarm, my cheek, now flushed now pale, my tremulous voice, and my

* An historical fact.

abstracted manner; and I once more saw in him that affectionate interest and anxiety so dear to my heart.

"You are ill, my beloved," said he at length.

"Beloved!" How the word thrilled through my heart! I never expected to hear it again from his lips; and the sound overcame me. "I shall be better soon," cried I, bursting into tears.

The surly jailer (Oh! how unlike Benoit!) who had taken his place, now summoned me away, and I slided my letter into my husband's hands. "Read it," said I, "and know that your doom is fixed *for to-morrow;* therefore I conjure you by our past loves to grant the request which that letter contains; and if you think I have deserved kindness from you, comply with my wishes."

Seymour, who had heard nothing of his approaching fate, took the letter, and

listened to me with a bewildered air; and I hastened from the prison. I had easily obtained permission to return to the prison at night.

"It will be the *last time*. You will never come again," said the brutal jailer: "your husband will never come back when he goes to the tribunal to-morrow, so come and welcome!"

I spent the intervening time in writing a letter to DeWalden, inclosing one to my uncle, which I begged him to forward; and I arranged every thing as if death awaited me. Nay, how could I be assured that it did *not?* But I kept all my fears to myself, and talked of hope alone to my poor servants, who wandered about, the pictures of grief.

When De Walden called that day I would not see him, but lay down on purpose to avoid him; for I dreaded to meet his penetrating glance.

As it was now the middle of July, days were shortening, and by eight o'clock twilight was gathering fast. My appointment was for half-past seven; and by a bribe I obtained leave from Benoit's unworthy successor to stay till half-past eight.

Then, summoning all my fortitude, I entered the cell of my husband. I shall pass over the first moments of our meeting; but I shall never forget them, and I am soothed and comforted when I recollect all that escaped from that affectionate and generous, though misguided being. Suffice, that all his arguments were vain to persuade me that he was not worthy to be saved, at even the smallest risk to a life so precious as mine.

"My life precious!" cried I: "a being without any near and dear ties! with neither parent, child, nor husband, I may *now* say," cried I, thrown off my guard by the consciousness of a desolate heart.

"I have deserved this reproach," said Seymour; "you have indeed no husband, therefore *why* should not I die? as, were I gone, Helen, I feel, *I know*, that *you* would be no longer *desolate!*"

I understood his meaning, but did not notice it. Bitter was now the anguish which I felt; nay, so violent was my distress, and so earnest my entreaties, that he would escape, as the idea that he refused me in consequence of *what I had just said*, would if he perished drive me, I was convinced, to complete distraction, that he at last consented to my request.

"But, take notice," said he, "that I do it with this assurance, that, *if* my escape puts you in peril, I will return and suffer for or *with* you; and then you shall again find that you have a *husband*, Helen, and our union shall be renewed in death, and cemented in our blood.—

I say no more. You command, and it is my duty to obey."

He then took off the *robe de chambre* which he wore in prison; and I dressed him in the loose gown I had made up for the occasion, and long enough to hide his feet; and even when he had my bonnet on, I had the satisfaction of seeing that he did not look much taller than I did. I now wrapped his robe tight round me, put all my hair under his night-cap, and with my handkerchief at my eyes awaited the jailer's summons; while Pendarves dropped the veil, and covered his face with his handkerchief as if in grief. But the anxious heavings of my bosom and the mournful ones of his were only too real. Every thing favoured us; the wind was high, and, by blowing the door to, blew out the lamp which the jailer held: therefore the only light was

from a dim lamp in the passage. At the door stood the trembling Juan.

"There, take care of her; for she totters as if she was drunk," said the jailer; "I warrant you she will never come again."

In five minutes more Seymour was in the cart, and very shortly after he reached our cottage in safety, and was, *as me*, lying in my bed in the Champs Elisés. I, meanwhile, went to bed, and made no answer, but by groans to the "Good night" and brutal consolations of the jailer, when he came to lock me up, without the smallest suspicion who I was. But when I heard myself actually locked up *for the night*, I threw myself on my knees in a transport of devout gratitude.

The next morning I rose after short and troubled rest, seating myself with my back to the door, that I might remain undiscovered as long as I could, in order to give my husband more time to

get away. But I could no longer retard the awful moment; for my jailer came to summon me before the tribunal.

"I am quite ready!" said I, turning slowly round. I leave you to imagine his surprise, his indignation, his execrations, and his abuse. I forgave him, for the poor wretch feared for his place, if not for his life.

"Yes: you shall go before the tribunal," said he, seizing me with savage fury. "But no, I must first send after your rascally husband."

He then locked me in; and I saw no more of him for two hours, when I heard a great noise in the passage, down which my cell when open looked, and presently the door was unlocked by the jailer himself, who exclaimed with a malignant smile, "Your husband is taken, and brought back! Look out, and you will see him!"

I *did* look out, I did see him, unseen by him at first, and I saw him walking up the passage with La Beauvais weeping on his arm, and one of hers thrown across his shoulder.

An involuntary exclamation escaped me; and I retreated back into the cell. I have since heard that Henriot and his guards, De Walden, and Juan, were in the passage; but I only saw my husband and La Beauvais; and leaning against the wall I hid my face in my hands, oppressed with a thousand contending and bewildering sensations.

"There!" said the vindictive jailer, ushering in Pendarves, as if he felt how painful a *tête-à-tête* between us now would be; "there, citizen! I shall shut you up with your wife, till I know what is to be done with her. But perhaps you would like the other *citoyenne* better?"

"Peace!" cried Pendarves, "and leave us *alone*!"

"Helen!" said my husband.

"Mr. Pendarves!"

"I see how it is, Helen; nor can I blame you: appearances were against me. But I must and will assure you, that that person's appearing at such a time, and her behaviour, were as unexpected as they were unwelcome."

Still I spoke not: no, not even to inquire *why* I had the misery of seeing him return; and ere I had broken this painful but only too natural silence, and had only just resumed my woman's gown, the door was again thrown open, and an officer of the National Convention came to say, that I was allowed to return to my own house for the present, till further proceedings were resolved upon.

"Take notice, sir," said Pendarves,

"that this lady's only fault has been too great a regard for an unworthy husband; and that what you may deem a crime, the rest of Europe will call a virtue."

The officer smiled; and wishing my husband good night, I followed where he led.

At the gate I found De Walden, who accompanied me home, having first been assured by the officer that I should be under *surveillance*.

"And is it thus, rash Helen, you use your best friends, and risk an existence so valuable?" cried De Walden.

"Spare me, spare me your reproaches," said I: I am sufficiently *humbled* already."

"Not *humbled*—those only are humbled who could injure such a creature. Helen, I was in the passage at the prison, and I saw all that passed."

"Now then, while this recollection is fresh on your mind, let me ask you if you think yourself justified in staying

here where you are now exposed to insult and to danger, for the sake of one who at a moment which would have bound another man more tenderly than ever, could so meet and so offend your eyes?" I was still silent.

"Now then hear my proposal. I have the greatest reason to believe that I can secure an escape both for you, Alice, and myself, through the *barriere* this very night on the road to Switzerland. There, my dear friend, I offer you a home and a parent! My mother will be your mother, my uncle your uncle; and well do I know, that could my revered Mrs. Pendarves look down on what is passing here, she would be happier to see you under the protection of my family than under any other protection on earth!"

"No, my dear friend, no; your just resentment and your wishes deceive you. My mother valued her child's fame and

her child's virtues equal with her safety."

"Your fame could not suffer. I would not live even near you, Helen. I am as jealous of your fame as any mother could be: besides that *principle* would make me shun you.—No, Helen; I would see you safe *in Switzerland*, and then sail for America."

"Generous man! But you shall not quit your country for my sake: besides, I will *not* quit my husband in the hour of his danger. No, whatever be the fate of Pendarves, I stay to witness and perhaps to *share* it. The die is cast; so say no more."

By this time we had reached my home. Alice came to meet me.

"O my poor, dear master!" said she: "but it was all his own seeking. We had passed the barrier; but he *would* go back. He declared he could not, *would* not escape till he knew you were safe:

when just as I was got into the house in the Champs Elisés, and he was holding the reins in his hands, the officers seized him; and he said, 'I am he whom you seek—I am quite willing to accompany you.'"

"This in some measure redeems his character with me," cried De Walden; and *I* did not feel it the less because I *said nothing:* but at length I said, "Generous Seymour! He never *told me* this. He did not make a merit of it with me."

Juan now came in, lamenting with great grief his poor master's return. "O that vile woman!" cried he: "It was at her instigation that he was to have been tried and condemned to-day; and then she repented, and came to the prison to watch for his being led out, when she saw him brought back, and then she had the audacity to hang upon him, weeping and making such a fuss! while he,

poor soul, tried to shake her off, *assuring* her he forgave her, but *never wished to see her more!*"

"Did he *act* and talk thus?" cried I.

"He did indeed."

"And he came back from anxiety *for me!* O my dear friend, how glad am I that I had refused your proposal before I heard this!"—Sweet indeed was it to my heart to have the conduct of Pendarves thus cleared up.

That evening we learnt that Pendarves was to go before the tribunal the next day; and I was preparing to try to gain admittance to him, and to see him as he came out, when an order for my own arrest came, and an officer and his assistants *to lead me to a prison*. Juan instantly went in search of De Walden; but I was led away before his return.

On the road we met the tyrant: "*Ah*

ha, ma belle!" cried he, "where are your green spectacles?"

I haughtily demanded my liberty; but he said I was a dangerous person—and to prison I was borne. To such a prison too! My husband's cell was a palace to mine; but I immediately concluded that they wished to make my confinement so horrible that I should be glad to leave it on any conditions.

Two days after, and while I had been, I found, forbidden to see any one, I received a letter informing me that my decree of arrest should instantly be *cassé*, my husband set at liberty and sent with a safe-conduct out of the frontiers, if I would promise to smile on a man who adored me, and who had power to do whatever he promised, and would perform it before he claimed one approving glance from my fine eyes.

I have kept this letter as a specimen of Jacobin love-making. It was not signed with any name, except that of my *dévoué serviteur**; and I never knew from whom it came.

It told me an answer would be called for *in person* the day after the next; and anxiously did I await this interview—await it in horrors unspeakable. There was however one comfort which I derived from this letter: *till* it was answered, I felt assured that my husband was safe. Dreadful was the morrow: more dreadful still the day after it; for hourly now did I expect the visit of the wretch. But that day and the next passed, and I saw no one but my taciturn and brutal jailer, and heard nothing but the closing of the prison doors.

The next day too I expected him still

* Devoted servant.

in vain; but that night I marked an unusual emotion, and, as I thought, a look of alarm in my jailer; and my wretched scanty meals were not given me till a considerable time after the usual hour. That night too I and the other prisoners, I found, were locked up two hours before the customary time.

All that night I heard noises in the street of the most frightful description; and as my cell was near the front gates of the prison, I could even distinguish what the sounds were; and I heard the terrible tocsin sound to arms: I heard the report of fire-arms, I heard the shouts of the people, I heard the cry of *Liberty*, I heard '*Down with the tyrant!*' and all these mingled with execrations, shrieks, and, as I fancied, groans; while I sunk upon my knees, and committed myself in humble resignation to the awful fate which might then be involving him I

loved, and which might soon also reach me, and drag me from the dungeon to the scaffold!

At this moment of horrible suspense and alarm, and soon after the day had risen on this theatre of blood, my door was thrown open, not by my brutal jailer, but by DE WALDEN and JUAN! My jailer, one of the tools of despotism, had fled; the TWENTY-EIGHTH OF JULY had freed the country from the fetters of THE TYRANT: he was *then* at that moment on his way to the guillotine with his colleagues; and I, Pendarves, and hundreds else, were SAVED and FREE!

Oh! what had not my poor servants and De Walden endured during the four days of my imprisonment! Painful as that was, they feared worse evils might ensue; while Pendarves, confined with the utmost strictness, was not allowed to see even Juan!

But where was Pendarves? and why did I not see *him*, if he was indeed at liberty? De Walden looked down and replied, "He is at liberty, *I know*; but we have heard and seen nothing of him."

By this time we had reached my home, where I was received with tears of joy by my agitated attendants. But, alas! my joy was changed into mortification and bitterness: and when my happy friends called on me to rejoice with them, I replied, in the agony of my heart, "I *am* thankful, but I shall never *rejoice* again!" and for some minutes I laid my head on the table, and never spoke but by the deepest sighs.

"I understand you," replied De Walden; "and if I can bring you any welcome intelligence, depend on it that I will."

He then hastily departed; and worn out with anxiety, want of sleep, and sor-

row, I retired to my bed, and fortunately sunk into a deep and quiet slumber.

When I went down to breakfast the next day, I found De Walden waiting for me. His cheek was pale, and his look dejected; but he smiled when I entered the room, and told me he brought me tidings of my husband.

"Indeed!" cried I with eagerness.

"Yes; I have seen him. He is at a lodging on the Italian Boulevards—and *alone*."

"Alone! And—and does he not mean to see me; to call and—"

"How *could* he? Have you forgotten how you *last* parted? You resenting deeply his then only *seeming* delinquency; and *he* wounded by, yet *resigned* to, your evident resentment."

"True, true: yet still—"

"No; I have had a long conversation with Pendarves,—for after his late beha-

viour, and being convinced that he was *alone*, I had no objection to call on him, —and he received me as I wished. He even was as open on every subject as I could desire; and I found him, though still persecuted by the letters of La Beauvais, resolved never to renew any correspondence with her."

"If so, and if *sure* of himself, *why* not write to me, if he does not like to visit me? I am sure I have not proved myself *unforgiving*."

"Shall I tell you why? A feeling that does him honour; a consciousness that, fallen as he is from the high estate he once held in your esteem and that of others, he cannot presume to *require* of you, though you are his wife, a re-instatement in your love and your society; and he very properly feels that the first advance should come from you: for though, as I told him, the relaxed principles of

the world allow husbands a latitude which they deny to wives; still, in the eyes of God, and in those of nicely-feeling men, the fault is in both sexes equal; and an offender like Pendarves is no longer entitled, as he was before, to the tenderness of a virtuous wife. Nay, Pendarves, penitent and self-judged, agrees with me in this opinion, and is thereby raised in my estimation."

"What! does Pendarves feel and think thus?"

"Yes; therefore I will myself entreat for him entire forgiveness; but not *directly*, and as if a husband who has so grossly erred were as dear to you as one *without* error."

Here De Walden's voice failed him; but he soon after added, in a low voice, "And I trust that to have aided in bringing about your re-union will support me

under the feelings which the sight of it may occasion me."

"But does Pendarves think I shall be always inexorable?"

"He cannot think so; from your oft experienced kindness."

"Then why prolong his anxiety? Why not offer to return with him to England directly?"

"Because I think there would be an indelicacy in offering so soon to re-unite yourself to him. I would have you, though a wife, 'be wooed, and not unsought be won;' but I should not dare to give you this advice, were I not convinced that this is the feeling of Pendarves. Besides, I *also* feel that he would be less *oppressed* by your superior virtue, if he found it leavened by a little female pride and resentment."

"Well, well, I will consider the matter," said I.

The next day, and the day after, De Walden called and saw Pendarves. "He is very unhappy," said he; "though he might be the envy of all the first men in Paris. The most beautiful woman in it, who lives in the first style, is fallen in love with him; but he refuses all invitations to her house, does not answer her *billets-doux*, and rejects all her advances."

"He does not *love* her, I suppose?" I replied, masking my satisfaction in a scornful smile.

"No, Helen. He says, and I believe him, that he never really loved any one but *you*; and for La Beaumais, who persecutes him with visits as well as letters, he has a kind of aversion. Believe me, that at this moment he has all my pity, and much of my esteem; and *could* I envy the man who, having called you his, is conscious of the guilt of having left

you, I trust I should soon have an opportunity of envying Pendarves."

Oh! the waywardness of the human heart! or was it only the waywardness of mine? Now that I found my husband was anxious to return to me, I felt less anxious for the re-union; and having gained my point, I began to consider with more severity the faults which I was called upon to overlook; and though I had reclaimed my wanderer, I began to consider whether the reward was equal to the pains bestowed. And also I felt a little mortified to find De Walden so willing to effect our union, and so active in his endeavours to further it. These obliquities of feeling were, however, only temporary; and I had actually written to Pendarves, by the *advice* of De Walden, asuring him, all was so much forgiven and forgotten, that I was prepared to

quit Paris with him, and go with him the world over—when the most dreadful intelligence reached me!—Even at this hour I cannot *recall* that moment without agony. I must lay down my pen—

* * * * *

Pendarves continued to resist the repeated importunities of La Beauvais to visit her; but at length she sent a friend to tell him she believed she was dying, and trusted he would not refuse to bid her farewell.—Pendarves could not, dared not refuse to answer this appeal to his feelings, and he repaired to her hotel; in which, though he knew it not, she was maintained by one of the new Members of the Convention, whom she had inveigled to marry her according to the laws of the republic. When he arrived, he found her scarcely indisposed; and reproaching her severely with her treachery, he told her that all her artifices were

vain; that his *heart* had always been his wife's, though circumstances had enabled her to lure him from me; that now I had shone upon him in the moments of danger more brightly than ever, and was dearer than ever; and that he conjured her to forget a guilty man, who, though never likely perhaps to be happy again with the woman he adored, yet still preferred his present solitary but guiltless situation to all the intoxicating hours which he had passed with *her*.

La Beauvais, who really loved him, was overcome with this solemn renunciation, and fell back in a sort of hysterical affection on the couch; and while he held her hand, and was bathing her temples with essences, her husband rushed in, and exclaiming, "Villain, defend yourself!" he gave a pistol into the hand of Pendarves; then firing himself, the ball took effect: and while De Walden was

waiting his return at his lodgings to give him my letter of recall and of forgiving love, he was carried thither a bleeding and a dying man! But he was conscious; and while Juan, who called by accident, remained with him, De Walden came to break the dread event to me, and bear me to the couch of the sufferer.

He was holding my letter to his heart.

"It has healed every wound there," said he, "except those by conscience made; and it shall lie there till all is over."

Silent, stunned, I threw myself beside him, and joined my cold cheek to his.

"O Helen! and is it *thus* we meet? Is *this* our re-union?"

"Live! do *but* live," cried I, in a burst of salutary tears; "and you shall find how *dearly* I love you still; and we shall be so happy!—happier than ever!"

He shook his head mournfully, and

said he did not deserve to live, and to be so happy; and he humbly bowed to that chastising hand which, when he had escaped punishment for *real* errors, made him fall the victim of an imaginary one.

The surgeons now came to examine the wound a second time, and confirmed their previous sentence, that the wound was mortal; on which he desired to be left alone with me, and I was able to suppress my feelings that I might sooth his during this overwhelming interview.

These moments are some of the dearest and most sacred in the stores of memory—but I shall not detail them; suffice that I was able, in default of better aid, to cheer the death-bed of the beloved sufferer, and breathe over him, from the lips of agonizing tenderness, the faltering but fervent prayer.

That duty done, my fortitude was exhausted. I saw before me, not the err-

ing husband—the being who had blighted my youth by anxiety, and wounded all the dearest feelings of my soul; but the playfellow of my childhood, the idolized object of my youthful heart, and the husband of my virgin affections! And I was going to lose him! and he lay pale and bleeding before me! and his last fond lingering look of unutterable love was now about to close on me for ever!

"She has forgiven me!" he faltered out; "and Oh! mayst Thou forgive my trespasses against *thee!*—Helen! it is sweet and consoling, my only love, to die here," said he, laying his cheek upon my bosom:—and he spoke no more!

* * * * *

Alas! I could not have the sad consolation, when I recovered my recollection, to carry his body to England, to repose by those dear ones already in the grave; but I do not regret it now. Since then, the

hands of piety have planted the rough soil in which he was laid; flowers bloom around his grave; and when five years ago I visited Paris, with my own hands I strewed his simple tomb with flowers that spring from the now hallowed soil around.

Object of my earliest and my fondest love! never, no never, have I forgotten thee! nor can I ever forget! But, like one of the shades of Ossian, thou comest over my soul, brightly arrayed in the beams of thy loveliness; but all around thee is dark with mists and storms!

To conclude.—I have only to add, that after two years of seclusion, and I may say of sorrow, and one of that dryness and desolation of the heart, when it seems as if it could love no more, that painful feeling vanished, and I became the willing bride of De Walden; that my beloved uncle lived to see me the happy mother of two children; and that my

aunt gossips, advises and quotes, as well and as constantly as usual; that on the death of his uncle and his mother, my husband and I came to reside entirely in England; that Lord Charles Belmour, with a broken constitution and a shattered fortune, was glad at last to marry for a nurse and a dower, and took to wife a first cousin who had loved him for years,—a woman who had sense enough to overlook his faults in his good qualities, and temper enough to bear with the former; and he grows every day more happy, more amiable, and more in love with marriage.

For myself, I own with humble thankfulness the vastness of the blessings I enjoy; and though I cannot repent that I married the husband of my own choice, I confess I have never been so truly happy as with the husband of my mother's:—for though I feel that it is often delightful

to forgive a husband's errors, she, and she alone, is truly to be envied, whose husband has no errors to forgive.

END OF VOL. III.

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